Alice's story at NCIS

by Bad_Wolf_and_The_Oncoming_Storm

Summary

The first time they meet she was looking for shells, and he was just sitting there. What happened when they meet again? Gibbs love story... All right go to NCIS writes...

Gibbs/OC Gibbs/OFC

Slow to update - if I am talking too long please leave a comment to remind me to write and that people like this story.

Finished. Second book is up.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
The wind blows my red hair into my eyes as I walk along the beach looking for shells in the sand. As I round a fallen tree on the ground, I find a man sitting on the other side looking down at the gun in his hand. I walk over to him and watch him for a few minutes.

"'ello sir," I say to him

He looks over at me in what looks to me shock that someone else is on the beach. "Hello little one," he answers to my greeting.

"Are you alright sir?"

"Yes I am alright. What is a little girl like you doing on the beach alone?"

"I am not little I am five and a half."

"Ok," he said with a laugh, "but what are you doing here alone?"

"My family is over there," I say pointing at the what halfway up the beach, "they are swimming but I cannot swim so I am looking for shells. Do you want to help me?"

"Sure I will help you find some shells."

We walk up and down the beach, looking for shells. As the sun starts to set over the water my family leave the water and get ready to go home.

"Thank you for finding shells with me sir," I said.

"It was my pleasure. It helps me to stop thinking about my own problems," he answers me.

"My name is Alice, by the way," I say as I start to pick up the pile of shells we made over the couple hours of looking.

"My name is Leroy, it was nice to know you Alice," he said as he watches me pick up the shells.

"Goodbye," I say as I walk away with half of the shells we found.

"Goodbye."

"I left you some shells. Thank you for help."

I look back in time to see him laughing and picking up the half of the shells I left for him to take with him. I get back to where my family is and put the shells into the bag I brought to keep my shells together. I help carry all the gear to the car and get in to head home.

I though this what the only time I would never see Leroy, how wrong was I to think that.
Yankee White

I stepped out of my sister's car and straightened out my white t-shirt that sits over my blue flare-bottom jeans that is held up by a black belt that has a horse for the buckle, under my flare-bottom I have a pair of black combat boots. I walked beside Kate to the stars to board air force one. Once on board I walked over to sit next to the football for this trip.

Everyone stands when the president boards the plane. He talks to football and the secret service agent for a minute before going to get ready for takeoff. At lunchtime I eat some spaghetti and Kate does not eat anything. Football comes back from eating with the president, he drops his case. Kate and I look at him and he says that in basic training he drop the ball but picked it up again. He then claps and Kate calls the medic to look at him and they perform CPR.

"Kate he was just having lunch with the president," I say to Kate but everyone looks at me and then to people rush off to check on the president.

We land in Wichita, Kansas and the locals and the FBI arrive at the plane. Kate and the FBI head start to fight over who case it is for ages.

"If J. Edgar Hoover was alive, I'd tell him what I'm telling you. This body is in Wichita County, and as County Coroner I have jurisdiction. No one moves it until the M.E. says they can," the coroner said to everyone on the plane.

"Your jurisdiction doesn't supersede the FBI on Air Force One," Fornell said.

From her sat Kate said "It's not Air Force One, Agent Fornell," the men move to clear a path for her, "When the President departed on the backup plane, it became Air Force One. This is now Alpha Foxtrot 2900."

"Don't get into this pissing contest, Agent Todd. As you pointed out, the President's gone – it's no longer a Secret Service problem," Fornell said to Kate.

"Look. This could be a natural death, or it could be a botched attempt to murder the President. Until I know which, it's my problem."

"Uh, I don't give a damn which one of you is boss. You ain't moving this body until the M.E. says you can," the coroner said as the M.E. walked onto the plane followed by two other men, called Tony and Gibbs. The last man looked like I had seen him before but I can't remember from where.

"You talking about me, Elmo?" The M.E. asks the coroner.

"Ducky! How'd you like those steaks I air-expressed you?" The coroner, Elmo, answers.

"Ah, delicious!"

Fornell leaning over to speak quietly with Kate "He 'air-expressed' him steaks?"

Kate repaid with a shrug "It's a big state. Look how long it took him to get here."

Elmo points out the players "Uh, Agent Fornell here is FBI. Agent Todd, Secret Service. Ducky,
they’ve been fighting over this body like two hounds over a t-bone. And before I forget that young lady sitting over there is miss Todd."

"Well, it’s our t-bone for the moment," Ducky said.

"All these LEOs are contaminating the potential crime scene," Gibbs said.

"Oh yes, my assistant’s right. Everyone who boarded in Wichita will have to evacuate the planee," Ducky said while throwing his coat at Gibbs.

"I’m not going anywhere," Fornell said.

"I flew in on it," Kate said.

Everyone looked at me and I looked at each of them before mumbling "I flew in on it too."

"Very well, you three can stay. But everyone else must deplanee," Ducky said.

"Alright, you heard the M.E., let’s move it boys. Ducky, what do you think?" Elmo said.

Ducky said while examining body "No outward sign of trauma."

"He was stricken after having lunch with the President," Kate said.

"Yeah, how is the President?" Tony asks.

"He’s fine. His physician cleared him to fly on to L.A."

"What happened?" Gibbs asks.

Both Kate and Fornell look at Gibbs, he just keeps looking at them until Kate answers his question by saying "When the Commander returned from lunch, he had an equilibrium problem and his grip was too weak to hold his briefcase."

"Did he gradually become ill, or was it sudden?" Ducky asks.

"Sudden. He started to convulse and collapsed. The President’s physician believed that the Commander had a stroke."

Tony said while taking notes "Kinda young for a brain fart."

"Looks like a natural death to me, Elmo. They can leave with the body as long as they sign releases, " Ducky tells Elmo.

Fornell asks to Elmo "Why the hell didn’t you say that?"

"Couldn’t. Like I said, it’s the M.E.’s decision. Release forms are in my car,' Elmo answers him.

Fornell says to Kate "Let’s go. We can work out jurisdiction for Washington on the flight to Dallas."

As Kate walks off the plane she stops behind Ducky and Elmo who are talking about soft-shell crabs before walking off the plane. Gibbs walks around Ducky and the body to see that I am still on the plane.

"You not gonna leave the plane with everyone else?" Gibbs asks me, meaning Tony and Ducky look at where I am still sitting.
"Why you are not the M.E. assistant and Kate will be back. So if I sit here when she starts yelling I have the front sit to view it" I tell him with a smile so big it could break my face.

"You sound so sure of that."

"I know that because I am the best at annoying her and sitting back and watching the fireworks. It is fun."

"Why are you on the plane?" Tony asks.

"Kate is my sister, she talked to her boss to let me on the plane because my holiday plans where cancelled," I answers.

"What type of plans?"

"I am a military scout and have been for the last ten years. The group I am was canceled because the others stayed at the same leave as last year but I was leaved up and there is no room because the group is already full. The Connell wife was ill and can't do it this vacation so I am following my sister to annoy her."

"Tony, go hot. Show the pilot your credentials, get us the hell out of here," Gibbs says.

Tony begins to walks down away, away from where he needs to be. "Hey, hey the cockpit is upstairs not that way," I said. He then walks up the stairs to the cockpit to do as he is told.

"WHO THE HELL ARE YOU? You are not the M.E. assistant and there is not a single soft-shell crabs in within a thousand miles," Kate returned onto the plane while yelling at Gibbs and Ducky, with her hand on her gun before she sees me sitting here carmly.

"NCIS, we flow down from the NCIS. We flew down here from Washington to take over the investigation." Gibbs answers while flipping her his badge.

"First the FBI tries to muscle in, and now NCIS," Kate said while removing her hand from her gun.

"Yeah, well, I do believe this is a dead naval officer."

"Who died on Air Force One, after having lunch with the President it's my job to protect."

"Okay, we can share jurisdiction. You can be on my team."

"Your team? Why should you head the investigation?"

"You ever worked a crime scene, Agent Todd?"

"I am a Secret Service agent."

"I thought not," Gibbs said with a smirk.

"Well don't dismiss me like that! Okay, I earned my jock-strap."

"Yeah, does it ever give you that empty feeling?"

"What?"

"Your jock-strap."
"No. Like some species of frogs, I grow what I need," Kate said with a bright fake smile.

Gibbs smirked back at Kate, obviously impressed and enjoying the exchange, he looked over at me in time to see me hide a laugh behind my hand. Getting a glare from Kate. Then Tony interrupts my comedian show, scrambling down the stairs.

"Gibbs! Pilot won’t take off until the Secret Service chick gives us the..." Tony stops talking when he sees Kate before finishing by saying "thumbs up."

"I think that just made it my team," Kate sais while smirking at Gibbs.

"No. It means we’ll just have to hijack Air Force One. Tony, escort Agent Todd off this aircraft and close the hatch," Gibbs informs her.

Kate says while incredulous "You’re not serious. Wait!" Before chases after Gibbs up the stairs, "okay, okay! Your team, but only because I don’t want to delay us further by having to shoot you."

Kate offers her had to seal the deal, and after looking at it her a beat Gibbs shakes it and they both go upstairs leaving me with Ducky and the body.

"So Miss Todd how old are you?" Ducky ask me.

"Call me Alice please. I’ve lived on this Earth for 17 short years. Did agent Gibbs have to stop annoying my sister?" I answered him.

"I think he did, and please call me Ducky if I am to call you Alice."

"Ok," I said as the plane took off from the ground on the way back to DC.

I watch Tony photo the body while Ducky takes a liver temp. The liver temp is an hour earlier than the one Kate has written down so Gibbs, wants Ducky's one because he trust him.

"Tony, enough photo, agent Todd is going to give you the floor plan," Gibbs said to Tony.

"No she is not," Kate half yelled at Gibbs' retreading back.

I had to laugh at how Gibbs said she can shot Tony if the plans are leaked to the press and Kate returned it by saying she thinks she is destined to shot Gibbs.

A little while later Kate runs past me and Ducky with Gibbs and Tony on her tale. I follow them to find out what is going on. Kate gets to the bathroom door before Gibbs turns her around and tells her to throw up into the evidence bag. After Kate rinses her mouth out Ducky checks her over and tells us it is probably just the flu and Kate tells us the football that is meet not be on this flight has the flu and she had sex with him.

Kate is called up to the cockpit to talk to her boss leaving downstairs with NCIS who is moving the body for some reason but I really don't care.

"Where's the body?" Kate asks as she junes us downstairs a little later.

"I don't know," Gibbs answers with a laugh.

"Did you move it to the off ramp for a fast getaway? It's not going to work my superiors order me to
"Turn the body of to the FBI at Andrews."

"Kate if you wanted him to tell you where the body id you just fucked it up," I point out while stealing Gibbs coffee to watch his eyes ridden a little.

"Thank you Alice," Kate said in a bored tone of voice because she is used to me doing this sort of think. "Please give agent Gibbs his drink back."

"Rule 23: 'Never mess with a Marine's coffee... if you want to live'" Gibbs said to me as he took his coffee back.

"I want mess in with the coffee, I was holding it to see what you will do. And maybe to tip it onto Kate's lap, but not messing with the coffee itself," I tell him using big hand movements to show my point.

"Ok, just don't do it again. You like pissing people off?"

"The best way to get to know someone is to find out what happens when you pisses them. But I will not touch your coffee again."

"Thank you."

The ride was silent for the rest of the landing until I went with Kate to the hotel for the rest of the day. The next day we stop on our way to NCIS, I got two coffees one with milk and sugar and one black. When we got to NCIS I carried both into the meeting that is going on between NCIS, FBI and the secret service. I walk past everyone over to Gibbs and put the black coffee down in front of him. He looked up at me with a hint of a smile on his face before paying attention to the reports being giving say that the football from air force one died of a natural death. The FBI left and Kate was going to follow them but Gibbs called her back and ask when the president returns. She told him he returns tomorrow and she was flying out to rejoin the detail and he asks for him to come along. She said he can come but his gun cannot after he says please, so he leaves his gun in the desk and follows Kate. He tells his team to keep looking for what killed the football. I walk beside Gibbs, to the elevator. We enter the elevator and Kate just looks forward while I look at Gibbs waiting for him to drink his coffee.

"You know coffee is not good when it is cold," I say to Gibbs with a know-it-all tone of voice.

Gibbs gave me a skeptical look before taking a sip of the coffee only to look very surprised that it how he likes it. "How did you know how I like my coffee?" Gibbs ask me.

"I have friends in all the wrong places to find out all the right information."

It was silent again until we got to air force one and taken off. Gibbs keeps staring out the football of this flight. Kate is now over her flu and is all better. She tell Gibbs that she broke up with the other football yesterday before we left. She ask where else she is meant to meet people to which Gibbs answers Church while I say supermarket.

"Do you think he will drop?" Kate asks Gibbs but he does not answer her.

At this point in time the next press employee is taken to talk to the president. "Where are they going?" Gibbs ask Kate.
"The President promised ten minutes to each member of the Press on board. Since we kicked them off at Wichita, he’s playing catch up."

"Three years before 9/11, Clancy wrote a book where a terrorist hijacked a commercial jetliner and crashed it into the Capital, he says as he looks into the Press cabin "in the Harrison Ford movie, the terrorists were reporters."

"Gibbs, everyone on board has been vetted by us for years. Except you."

"In the film, the terrorists got they’re credentials from a Secret Service turncoat."

"I like that the agent's name was Gibs with one 'B'. Are you going to try to kill the president Mr Gibbs?" I ask making both Gibbs and Kate look at me. "What the hell? Am I not allow to like a film."

Before they can answer me Gibbs gets a call about the dead body and Kate ignores me again, while making the list for Gibbs about the differences in the two plans.

Gibbs comes back and Kate starts to tell him the differences only to be pulled along behind him to a room but it is full for a meeting room. He then pulls her into the loo and I have to wait outside of the door while trying to listen in on what is happened. They left the loo and Gibbs went one way back to where we were sitting and Kate went to the president. I follow Gibbs to see him getting a gun out of the unlocked gun safe, as he turned around before he almost walks into me.

"Can I help?" I ask as quick as possible.

He looks at me for a second before he asks "can you shot a gun?"

"Yes sir," I said with a salute, by falling back into the military scout training.

"Don't call me sir," he said as he grabs another gun and gives it to me, "have my back."

We speed walk almost run back to the football as a press employee says to call a doctor. He turns around shooting at Gibbs who returns fire. Without hesitation I also open fire but unlike Gibbs who shoot at the body I took just one shot to the head. He went do and Gibbs clear him. He gave the gun to Kate as I hand my to football.

Once we land Kate quits as she leaves the plane and I walk beside her. Gibbs runs up beside us and tells Kate if she tried that at NCIS he won't give her the changes to quit.

Before he gets into the car that just stopped he turns around and says "be there at 0900 tomorrow. Oh and Alice don't forget the coffee."
Hung out to dry

I walk down the street to the coffee shop to get the morning coffee for Gibbs like I have for the last week. I am wearing a black leather jacket that hangs down to my knees, a white long sleeve shirt, black fleer bottom jeans, and combat shoes. I order a black coffee, one with milk and sugar, and a cream bun for breakfast. While I am waiting for them to finish making my order to be completed, my phone rings.

"Alice," I answer after checking the caller id and seeing it is tony.

"We have a dead marine," Tony tells me over the phone, in the background you can hear cars driving, "Kate is on the way to pick you up to bring you to the scene."

"Ok see you there," I say right before I hang the phone up and put it into my inside jacket pocket. I pick up my order and get outside in time to see Kate looking for a parking spot so I walk over to her car and get in. She starts to drive over to the crime scene before I even had my seatbelt on. On the way I ate my cream bun.

When we go to the scene, but we can't get into the scene because we don't have a photo id from NCIS. Before we can call anyone, Tony comes over to get the ladder and sees us. He gets us into the crime scene.

"Look who I found," Tony called over to both Gibbs and Ducky. Kate and I walk over to the scene, Kate is in a business suit with a skirt and heels. "MPs weren't going to let them through," Tony finish say.

"I got my sig and badge but HQ didn't issue my photo ID," she says while looking at the body, "god is this for real?"

"Unfortunately, my dear, it is," Ducky says.

"Put 'em on," Gibbs said to both of us while handing us a pair of gloves each.

"Ah, your first crime scene with, Caitlin," Ducky says.

"What about air force one?" Kate asks Ducky.

"Doesn't count, you were in the Secret Service. Hey, tony, take a team photo for posterity."

"Forget posterity. Sun's gonna be up soon," Gibbs said before handing Kate a box, "welcome to NCIS."

Kate opens the box and pulls out one of the shoes, "how did you know my size?"

While smirking he put a NCIS cap on her head, "Put 'em on. Can't work a field in high heels."

"Depends what type of work type of work you are doing," I say with a smirk of my own watching as Kate goes red.

"I was just about to say that," Tony says to me.

"Your mind, DiNozzo, runs a gamut from X to XXX," Kate said to Tony.

"Yeah. But she said it first, why does she not get into trouble?"

"Because she is typing to get me to snap and get angry."

I stick my tongue out her back as she walks back to the car to put on her new shoes. Before I even have a changes to look around to see what is happening Gibbs take one of the coffee cups out of my hands.

"Hay that is mine," I tell him right as he takes a sip and nearly spits it on the ground. He quickly swaps to the other cup in my hand.

"Photo," Gibbs says to Tony, "watch Tony work," he says to me.

Tony lifts the camera on a monopod up to the roof of the car in which the marine fall through he asks "Ducky? Why would Gibbs rip his hard line out and dunk his cell phone into a jar of paint thinner?"

"Oh, dear," Ducky said.

"What?"

Ducky climbs into the car to look at the bottom of the dead guy, "I should have realized the time of year. It's his anniversary."
"Which married?"
"Why, the last one of course. Isn't it always?"
Tony joins Ducky in the car to say, "Ducky, I'm not following."
"Every ex-wife number three gets drunk on their anniversary and calls him.Repeatedly."
"Why doesn't he, uh, change his number?"
"I have no idea. In case you haven't noticed, Gibbs is a man of more questions than answers."
They both chuckle but I ask "why three ex-wives? After one or two, why keep trying?"
"I don't know, my dear," Ducky says.
Before we can keep talk Kate and Gibbs come over towards the car. Tony takes a photo of Kate.
"Thanks, DiNozzo," Kate says sarcastically.
"Hey, you could be the NCIS poster-girl in that outfit," Tony says.
"OR a collage girl who knows how to have fun," I add making Kate look like she is about to explode at me.
Gibbs walks up to me and puts an NCIS cap on my long red hair that rest at the bottom of my bottom.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
We finish off out of the crime scene and went to the hanger bay to talk to the jumpers.
"You JAG or NCIS?" asks a marine who turns out to be the captain.
"Do I look like a lawyer?" Gibbs asks the marine.
"Word's all over the base by now. My men can't even call their families and let them know they're not the one who died."
"Was Sergeant Fuentes married?"
"He has a wife and son."
"Notification detail should be there to talk to her by now. Word will get out he was killed."
"Sergeant Fuentes was under my command. I'd like to see her."
"After we finish questioning you and your men."
"How long is that gonna take?"
"I don't know."
"These men have another jump at 21:00."
"They're jumping again tonight?" Kate asks the captain.
"We don't stop for casualties in war, miss. Neither do we in training," the captain answers.
"Not true. Captain. They don't jump off a lower bunk until we find out what happened," Gibbs says.
"I don't take orders from NCIS cops," he said insulted.
"Special Agents. And you'll follow this order."
"Or what, Special Agent?" he says belligerently.
Gibbs pulls out his phone and hit speed dial.
"I don't take orders from your boss either," the captain said.
"I'm not calling my boss; I'm calling yours. Commandant Mae? Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS," Gibbs says to him.
After the captain walks away Gibbs closes the phone. Tony turns to Gibbs and says knowingly, "I don't have a Commandant of the Marine Corps on my speed dial."
"Captain didn't know that," we walk over to the plan, "alright DiNozzo, shoot and sketch. Focus on the static lines, Kate, Alice and I'll start the interrogation."
Tony walks onto the plan and says "jumping's gotta be so cool."
"Hey! You wanna play paratrooper, pay a $180. Take a class, like all those other weekend warriors," Gibbs says to him.
Leaning round the side of the plane to call after Gibbs sarcastically "yeah, I have so many weekends free!"
The three of us walks over to the hanger to interrogate the marines, or at least Gibbs and Kate are going to interrogate them and I am going to watch and write it down for Gibbs.
"Did Fuentes lead your stick?" Gibbs asks.
"Yes, sir. I was number two, Ramsey was three, Brinkman four," said another marines.
The men explain what happened at the beginning of the jump today. Fuentes jumps first, then
Dafelmair, than Ramsey and lastly Brinkman.
"I didn't know whether it was Paul or Thumper," Ramsey said after explaining what happened on the jump.
"Thumper?" Kate asks.
"That's what we called Fuentes, ma'am."
"Sounds crazy now, but he was the squad's good-luck guy, ma'am," Brinkman said.
"He was a walking rabbit's foot," Ramsey said.
"Oh," Kate said with a nod.
"Yes, ma'am. He always seemed to dodge the bullets. We could tell you a million stories."
"Why don't you tell us just one?" Gibbs asks.
"Well, sir, Larry bought a new bike last week. Car ran a red light, he went over it and into a plate glass window," Ramsey answers him.
"Dinged his collarbone a little. Other than that, not a scratch," Dafelmair add on.
"Dinged it a little?" Gibbs asks
"Day or two, he was fine, sir," Dafelmair said.
"Hmm… who reached him first?"
"I did, sir. I saw him a roman candle short of the field. Soon as I got out of my harness, I took off to find him."
"You two?" Gibbs asks the other two marines.
"I hung up in a tree. Dave gave me a hand. Saw Paul yelling, we joined him," Brinkman answers first.
"Can't believe we let Thumper die. It's like a bad movie," Ramsey said.
"Was he dead when you reached him, Corporal Dafelmair?" Gibbs asks.
"Yes, sir. Died on impact, sir. I'm sure… well, at least I hope he did," Dafelmair answers him.
"Why didn't he pull his reserve?" I ask from behind Gibbs.
"Jumping from 1300ft, your main fails? You have three, maybe four seconds to react, ma'am," Brinkman answers.
"Okay. Each of you need to prepare a statement detailing what you saw," Gibbs said.
"Yes, sir!" all three say at the same time. The Marines go to pick up their parachutes, but Gibbs stops them.
"Whoa! Leave 'em. Your gear is ours now."
After the marines have left them Gibbs asks us "what did you get out of that?"
"He didn't have time to pop his reserve," Kate answers without hesitation.
"Why not?"
"Obviously his reaction time was too slow," Kate said while looking at Gibbs.
Turning and walking out of the hanger Gibbs says "That's…"
"Dinged collarbone," I say making Kate jump up into the air.
"Injured clavicle hurts like hell. Takes more than a couple of days to heal," Gibbs says.
"You think Corporal Dafelmair was lying?" Kate says to Gibbs ignoring my while I mess with her hair.
"He was if he knew that Thumper was taking painkillers so he could jump," Gibbs say while hiding a smile at me messing with Kate.
"That's stupid."
"No. That's a Marine."

We went down to autopsy where Ducky is outlining the victim's various injuries to Gibbs, Kate, and I, using the x-rays as visuals as he goes.
"Our victim sustained a broken neck, crushed vertebrae, multiple leg fractures, shattered pelvis…" Ducky said.
"What about his clavicle?" Gibbs asks.
"With all the massive skeletal damage, you're curious about his clavicle?"
"Humour me."
Ducky pulls down the need x-ray and has a look at it, "huh, how did you know? There's a fine hairline fracture on the left clavicle, which he..."

"Incurred recently, but not last night," Kate cuts off Ducky.

"No, it's begun to mend," turns to look at Gibbs, Kate and I, "you two are beginning to scare me."

"Ducky, would that fracture pain him much?" Gibbs asks Ducky.

"Oh, nothing too severe. But of course, the shock of a parachute opening would have hurt like blazes," he said while looking and pointing at the x-ray "how did you know?"

"The girl in the SUV said she heard him moan. Was he alive after impact?"

"Briefly," Ducky says with a nod at Gibbs.

Ducky goes over to the body. Kate moves to follow, but Ducky stops her.

"Ah, not too close, Caitlin. I'll put it on the monitor," Ducky said to Gibbs, "he most certainly would have died of massive trauma, but the technical cause of death was severing of the femoral artery."

Ducky hauls down a camera probe and feeds the image of the wound unto the big screen monitor mounted on the wall while he explains. Kate looks queasy at the graphic image.

"Yes. Our young Marine... bled to death," Ducky said.

After Ducky we went up to see Abby in the lab. We enter and see that Tony is already there talking to Abby.

"Abby, you have my tox screen results?" Gibbs asks Abby.

"Yup, right over here," said as she goes over to the computer, "the victim tested positive for Percocet and Vicodin. Double your pleasure."

"Double your fun," Tony said.

"What kind of levels?" Gibbs asks.

"0.17. He was slow juiced, like a koala bear. My guess is that he popped right before he dropped," Abby answers.

"The Marines we questioned in his string probably knew."

"Why didn't they tell us?" Kate asks.

"Semper Fi. You rat, you fry," Abby answers. When Gibbs gives Abby a look. She sober, and says "sorry."

"Was his reserve chute okay?"

"Yeah, it was perfect. All he had to do was pop it."

"Well he might have, if his reflexes weren't slowed by opioids," Kate say.

"Opioids?" Tony says.

"General term for opiates and synthetic analgesics."

"Go Kate!" Abby and Kate fist bump.

Gibbs asks Tony "you sure you were a Baltimore cop?"

Tony makes a face and Abby smirks. I just shack my head at them.

Getting back on topic Kate says "okay, he was too juiced to pop his reserve."

"Maybe. Maybe not. Pump adrenalin when you jump. Your main chute doesn't open, it would really kick in to high gear," Gibbs says.

"Gibbs, if he had the reflexes to use it, why didn't he?"

"I don't know," then to Abby he asks "what you'd find from the shroud lines of his main chute?"

Abby walks into her other lab area. We all follow her.

"Fibber disintegration, but not from textile fatigue. It's fluorescing as some sort of cleaning agent," Abby says while running a UV light over the broken lines, "but that didn't cause this kind of damage."

"Edges look melted," I say while looking down to see the lines that she is showing us.

"I haven't tagged it yet, but it was definitely an acid that shredded the lines holding three hundred pounds of jumping Marine."

"How long to find the acid and check out the rest of those chutes?" Gibbs enquire.

"Well I'm flying solo, so at least a day."

"Would it go faster if you had an assistant?"
"Oh, definitely."
"Okay," he says to Abby and then turns to Kate and says "you got the job."
"I get to do forensics?" Kate asks Gibbs.
"No, you get to schlepp for Abby. She gets to do forensics," Gibbs answers while he leads Tony and I back to the lift.

While Kate and Abby work on the lines, Tony and Gibbs look into the marines they talk to today and the victim. I use the spare computer to write up the report from the interview from the marines. Once I finished writing the transcript I hit print and using Gibbs' account to print it off. Once I have the transcript in my hand I return to place it on Gibbs' desk.

We go to the par-aloft where a parachute is hanging suspended down the shaft. Tony stands below it taking pictures. Gibbs is inside talking with Col. Dafelmair while I take notes again. The Corporal is preparing a table for of chutes.

"Why didn't you tell us you were a rigger, Corporal?" Gibbs requests of Dafelmair.
"Thought you knew, sir," Dafelmair responds.
"Did you?" Gibbs says with while grimacing "What's next?"
"Sign the log and stick it in the chute pocket."

After Dafelmair signs the log, Gibbs picks it up and compares it to the one from Sergeant Fuentes' chute.

"Same signature," Gibbs says.
"That was the log from Thumper's chute, wasn't it, sir?" Dafelmair requests.
"Yup, you packed it." Gibbs starts to walk away. Dafelmair anxiously races after him. Tony follows behind them.
"Sir, I didn't know he'd get one that I packed. The chutes are handed out randomly, even when we jump," Dafelmair said.
"Riggers usually go on jumps?"
"On training runs, yes sir."
"How many riggers jumped last night?" Tony ask
"Uh, Corporal Ramsey, Brinkman, and Thumper, of course. He was senior rigger," Dafelmair said.
"Figured we knew that too?" Gibbs asks.
"Sir, we weren't trying to hide anything."
"Oh, like hell you weren't, Corporal!" Gibbs exasperated.
"You all knew Thumper was using painkillers for that dinged collarbone," Tony said while pulling the tag on a chute, popping it, "he died because he was too juiced to pull his reserve."
"Sir, there was no way for anyone to sabotage a chute and count on it getting to a specific jumper," Dafelmair said.
"Were all the chutes packed here?" Gibbs said.
"Yes, we prepped them at 09:00. Put them on the trucks for the jump at 18:00."
"They were here for nine hours unattended?"
"Under lock and key, sir."
"Who's got the key?"
"Captain Fuentes and Thumper, as senior rigger, both have keys."

Gibbs and Tony share a look. Gibbs open up a folder containing a police report.
"You had a criminal record before entering the Corps, Corporal," Gibbs says.
"Made a few mistakes, sir," Dafelmair respond to him.
"Shoplifting. Drug possession."
"It was a long time ago, sir."
"Three years. Not so long," Tony said.
"Look, sir, you have my file. You know the judge gave me a choice. Prison or the Service. The Corps gave me a second chance, sir. And I would never do anything to hurt it or one of my brother Marines. Never, sir," Dafelmair says.
Gibbs, Tony and I walk past a training area where an instructor is teaching new jumpers how to roll when they hit the ground.
"You ever jump?" Tony asks Gibbs while looking out the training jump.
"When I get an electric shock," Gibbs answers.
"Explains the lack of power tools."
"You gonna do it?" Gibbs asks while looking pointedly at the jumpers.
"What?"
"Spend $180 to defy gravity."
"Yeah, I think I am."
"Agent Gibbs," a marine yells as he runs over to us to give Gibbs a mail package. "This came for you, sir. I just missed you at the par-aloft."
"Thank you, Lance Corporal," Gibbs says to the marine.
"Okay, sir," the marine says before he leaves.
"Who's it from?" Tony asks Gibbs.
"Ducky," Gibbs answers Tony, while opening the package.
The package is a new cell phone. When Gibbs pulls the phone out of the box, a note falls to the ground. Tony picks it up and reads it.
"Jethro, bean counters couldn't find you so they gave this to me. I suggest you read the instructions on call blocking," Tony read Gibbs' note from Ducky.
"That addressed to you?" Gibbs asks Tony sarcastically.
The new phone rings.
"It works," I point out.
"Gibbs. Yeah, I'll be there in twenty," Gibbs answers the new phone, he hangs up, they go back to watching the trainees, "you know, some of these guys freeze on their first jump. Have to be kicked in the ass to get 'em out."
"Not me," Tony says.
"No. You fall into the category I want to kick in the ass on the ground."
Gibbs forcefully shoves the empty box into Tony's gut, making him grunt. Gibbs leaves and I follow him straight away, Tony lingers to watch the trainees.

We return to the office and go straight down to the lab to see what Kate and Abby has found with the lines. Abby has the parachute spread out all over the lab. The lines are stretched taught in every direction like a spider's web. Abby moves through them carefully scanning each with a UV light.
Gibbs, Tony and I walk in.
"Very electric Kool-Aid, Abby," Tony says.
"I was thinking more Blue Man Group," Abby says in return to Tony.
"Sergeant Fuentes's chute wasn't the only one tampered with," Kate tells us.
"How many?" Gibbs answers.
"Nine, out of sixteen. Log book signatures show different riggers packed the lot."
"How many did Corporal Dafelmair pack?"
"Four. The rest were packed by Corporal Brinkman and Sergeant Fuentes."
"Corporal Ramsey didn't pack any?" Tony asks.
"Nope. When his signature didn't show up on a single chute, I called Captain Fuentes. He put Corporal Ramsey on a two-week rigging suspension for sloppy work. And guess who wrote him up for that sloppy work."
"Senior rigger. Sergeant Fuentes," Gibbs says and Kate nods.
"We got motive," Tony said.
"We got more than that. Kate and I have a theory," Abby says.
"Why didn't you take to me this fast?"
"You're like a piercing, Tony. Takes a while for the throbbing to stop and the skin to grow back."
"That's more than I wanted to know," Tony says while smiling ruefully
"What's the theory?" Gibbs asks.
"Okay. Every time you lace up your Docs or cinch your laundry bag, you leave some skin cells behind. It's the same with the parachute rigging, Abby explains while typing at the computer, "I pulled skin samples from the deployment bags of the chutes that were futzed with."

"Did you get a DNA signature?"

"All nine knots had a number of different sets of skin samples, but there's only set that's common to all nine."

"The saboteur."

"Our riggers of record packed the chutes, then someone came in and repacked them, leaving some skin behind," Kate says.

"Corporal Ramsey?" Tony asks but sounds like he's stating a fact.

"Well, depending on how much he knows about forensics, he's either very smart or very dumb," Abby says.

"There's gotta be other chutes that Corporal Ramsey packed in the par-aloft inventory for comparison," Gibbs says.

"Hnn, nugatory. I checked. They were all packed since he's been suspended."

"Well there's an Armed Forces DNA registry. All military personnel are on record, right?"

"Yeah."

"Then we got our guy," Kate says with a satisfied voice.

"No," Gibbs says with a sigh, "all we got is a pile of dead scene. The only thing you can use the DNA registry for is to identify a body."

"Well there has to be a way around that," I say from my spot behind Abby, watching in satisfaction when Abby, Kate and Tony jump at the sound of my voice.

"See, now you're thinking like an NCIS agent," Gibbs says to me while sound proud.

I grin, proud that I am getting somewhere and not just sitting letting everyone else do the work.

I stood in the observation room of the interrogation Room with Tony watching as Kate and Gibbs interrogee.

"Killer doctored them and repacked them. Sergeant Fuentes died as a result of that. It's premeditated murder," Gibbs says.

Lt. Bud Roberts sits in the interrogation room with Gibbs and Kate.

"I'm sold. Hey, if I'm on the jury, you've got my vote," Bud said to Gibbs.

"We found DNA evidence on the chute deployment bag knots," Kate said.

"Belonging to your suspect?"

"We believe so. To be certain, we have to access the Armed Forces registry."

"That's impossible! Registry was set up to identify remains only. He knows that," Bud scoffs.

"I do?" Gibbs asks.

"You tried to use it when you after Commander Rabb, for murder."

"He get him?" Kate asks.

"No, because he wasn't guilty. You couldn't use the DNA registry then, what makes you think you can use it now?"

"You, lieutenant, you're a smart lawyer," Gibbs said as he lurks over Bud's shoulder, takes his pen, "and you know the law," he starts clicking the pen next to Bud's ears, one side then the other.

"I know why I'm here."

"Oh, I hope so. I requested you."

"Yeah, you requested me because you think you can work me like you did last time when I ratted out Commander Rabb."

"You did not 'rat' on anyone. You told the truth," he starts looking for lint on Bud's shoulder.

"I, uh, gave my uniform an extra lint roll this morning, Agent Gibbs. And you waltzing around in my blind spot? Not gonna intimidate me this time."

"Were at 24 hours now, soon it's going to be 48. You've done investigations, you know what that means?"

"I've done JAG Nano-investigations, sure. At 48 hours, you're evidence begins to degrade.
Disappeared witnesses change their stories, suspects improve theirs. I know."
"So help us," Kate say.
"No! You're not going to get me to lawyer you passed an iron-clad prohibition that prevents tapping into DNA records that were designed to identify bodies. Not chase suspects."
"This guy is guilty. He killed him. Let him drop to his death from 1300ft," Gibbs says.
"It doesn't matter."
"For every legal firewall, there is a way around it."
"I can't help you. And can I please have my pen back?" asks Bud with a shack of his head.
"Oh. Oh yeah, sure," Gibbs said as he returns the pen, "you're gonna need it, because if I can't have my DNA I'm gonna need some search authorizations signed," he smiles conspiratorially at Kate.

We head out to the main part of the office.
"You knew Lieutenant Roberts wasn't going to lawyer us access to the military database," Kate says to Gibbs.
"Did I?" Gibbs asks innocently.
"You did. So why go through the exercise?"
"Kate, I come from a long line of horse traders. First rule, you pick the best horse in the barn and you work the deal until it bursts."
"That way, when you go for the second best nag, you get her for a steal," Tony says.
"The search authorization," Kate says after realizing it.
"We didn't have probable cause. But the lieutenant, he's a man who aims to please. You never work the system, when you can work the people," Gibbs says.
"Any of those horse traders you come from get hung?"
"Yeah, a few," Gibbs says glibly and Kate nods, unsurprised. Gibbs then say to Tony "Did you find out what Ramsey was written up for?"
"Ah, yeah," Tony answers while reading from a clipboard "frayed lines, bent cones, cuts in the canopy. Tell ya, I hope this guy isn't going to medical school at night," then he remembers something else, "hm, yeah! Scuttle butt is..."
"Scuttle butt?" Kate says.
"That's Marine, for watercooler gossip," Gibbs says and Kate nods in understanding.
"The scuttle butt is that Ramsey took a swing at Thumper for getting him suspended," Tony continual.

Gibbs's cell phone rings. He pulls it out to look at the call display. "Identity withheld," Gibbs reads.
"Probably the reason you married her," Tony says.
Kate and I looks up, interested. Gibbs looks annoyed, so I slowly move behind Tony.
"She probably hid her real personality. As most women do," Tony continual not knowing the danger he is in at the moment for the team.
Now Kate gives him a disgruntled look, while the phone continues to ring.
"And by that time it was too late, because you'd already…” Tony says only to finally looks at Gibbs, who is staring at him. Just daring him to finish that sentence. Tony wisely withdraws. The phone keeps ringing.
"I'm gonna shut up now," says as he backs away onto the pin I have pointed at his back making him jump in pain.
"Now?" Gibbs said sarcastically. Tony slinks back to his own desk. Quietly.
"Do you really just say 'as most women do'?" Kate asks tony while Gibbs looks over at me and mouthed thank you. Tony just gives her a petulant look.
"Meet me at the par-alof at 14:00. We'll execute our search authorization to go through the rigger's lockers," Gibbs said.
"That's two o'clock Secret Service time, Kate," Tony said.
"We used Zulu time, Tony," Kate said smugly.
"Zulu time. Oh yeah, that'd be…” Tony started while scratching his chin.
"19:00."
"I knew that," Tony says with a scoff.

Gibbs shakes his head and leaves. I wait all of five minutes before I leave to get me some coffee.

We are back on base, ready to conduct the search warrant, Tony is the trainee getting lessons in how to jump and land properly. He's all decked out in the cameo gear, too.

"Keep your feet together, cushion the impact," a marine said to Tony.

"That's it?" Tony asks.

"You signed the release to notify next of kin, right?"

"Just don't say break a leg," Tony said with a huff of laugh.

The Marine pats him on the back and Tony turns sideways to jump the five feet to the ground. He hits hard, but manages to roll back up to his feet. Gibbs, Kate and I are approaching, watching him.

"How was that?" Tony asks the marine.

"Very ladylike," Kate says.

"DiNozzo! What are you doing?" Gibbs asks

"Ah..." Tony starts to say while taking off helmet, "just doing a little research for Abby."

"For Abby?" Gibbs ask Tony doubtfully.

"Well, maybe I'm serving two masters."

"You're serving one, now," Gibbs said while crooking a finger at Tony.

"How did you get into NCIS?" I asks.

I smiled," Tony answers with a grins.

"Gibbs," I wait to he looks at me before continuing, "Where you drunk on the job? And then hired Tony?" I ask with a straight face. Gibbs looks away from me with a small smile on his face looking like he found it amusing that I think the only way for Tony to get a job.

"I had the riggers' lockers sealed immediately after the incident," a marine says.

Tony, Gibbs, and Kate snap on gloves. Thumper's string of jumpers are lined up in front of them.

"Keys?" Gibbs says to Ramsey, who hands her over his keys. Gibbs give them to Kate, she opens Ramsey's locker, Tony gets the second set of keys and goes to Dafelmair's locker and Gibbs takes the third and final locker. All three go through the lockers for a bit. While I look over Gibbs shoulder. After a small amount of time Kate finds a small box full of stuff.

"Got something," Kate yells so Gibbs, Tony and I can hear her. She sets the box down on the table and starts carefully unloading it. Rags, tools, a canister of something.

"Brass-stripper solvent," Gibbs said as he picks up the canister.

"Read the contents," Kate told Gibbs.

Gibbs flips the container over and tries to read the small print on the back, but can't make it out without his glasses. He passes it back to Tony with a wince.

"Contains petroleum distillate, ammonia, and sulfuric acid. Harmful if swallowed. Or applied to shroud lines," Tony reads.

"Ramsey's locker," Kate says.

"That stuff's not mine," Ramsey said.

"Sergeant Nutt, place the corporal in custody. Tony, read him," Gibbs states while taking off his gloves.

"You have the right to remain silent," Tony says while cuffing Ramsey. Tony keeps reading Ramsey his rights while Gibbs relocks his locker.

"Scuttle butt has it that you and Thumper mixed it up in the par-aloft," Gibbs said.

"We exchanged words, sir," Ramsey answers.

"And fists."

"Punch or two was thrown, nothing serious. I damn sure wasn't angry enough to kill him, sir."
"Well maybe you only meant to scare him. But Thumper was on painkillers and didn't have time to pull his reserve."
"I didn't touch his chute, sir. How could I? I'm on suspension. The par-aloft is under lock and key."
Tony enters the observation room. Kate and I is already there.
"What'd you find?" Kate asks Tony as he enters.
"Hardware store where our guy did one-stop shopping. Clerk's pretty fussy. He does remember a Marine in a real hurry to copy a key," Tony answers.
Kate nods. In the Interrogation room, Gibbs reveals a duplicate key.
"All you needed was a key. Like this one I found in Thumper's personal effects," Gibbs says while Ramsey looks nervous.
"If that's the par-aloft key, you won't find one like that on my keychain," he says as Gibbs checks the keys "I've messed up some rigging, sir, but never intentionally. A guy jumps with one of my chutes, he puts his life in my hands. I never breached that trust, sir, never," Ramsey answers Gibbs.
"Now," Gibbs holds up the key to find that it match, "Are you gonna tell me that was a plant too?"
"Had to be. I'm not guilty, sir," he said desperately
In the observation room, Kate rolls her eyes at Tony while he says "they're always so sincere when they say that."
Gibbs stares at Ramsey, who is on the verge of freaking out. "What if I was to give you an offer to prove that?" Gibbs asks.
"Anything, sir."
"Maybe you'd be willing to give us a sample of your DNA."
"Someone put that box in my locker and that key on my keychain. How do I know that you don't have my DNA on something else they planted too?"
"You don't," Gibbs says with a smirk on his face.
Gibbs is reading a file, or trying to. I look over his shoulder but am having a no luck at reading it either. He closes it in frustration and tosses it as a Frisbee to Tony.
"DiNozzo, where'd you learn how to write? China?" Gibbs asks Tony.
"I'd say Egypt, looks more like hieroglyphics," Kate adds on.
"Hey! You were in a rush to read it," Tony says indignantly.
"My mistake," Gibbs says while saluting him with his mug of coffee.
"Are those the interviews of the Marines that didn't jump?" Kate asks Tony.
"Yeah, it's not very interesting..." Tony tells her.
While Tony tells Kate what's in the file, Abby steps off the elevator and into the offices. She carrying a box with a cotton swab in it.
"Corporal Ramsey finally gave it up. His mouth was drier than mummy dust. I had to swap it four times to get a decent DNA sample," Abby says.
"How long to test for a match to the skin cells?" Gibbs says to Abby.
"Well, if you want no time stamp in court, you've gotta give me 24."
"Abby, clock's ticking."
"You don't expect a guilty man to give up his DNA," Kate said.
"Well, he's rolling the dice. Hoping for that one-in-a-million shot it won't match," Tony said.
"Guilty people do that?" I ask while looking at Gibbs for the answers.
"All the time," Tony answers with a huff.
"Uh, Kate and Alice has a point. What if Ramsey was set up? What if, what if he's innocent? What if he's telling the truth?" Gibbs says from his chair.
"Well we'll know in 24 hours but I wouldn't bet on it," Tony said.
"Well, you know what, I don't like sitting on my ass waiting for a DNA match," Gibbs said while getting up and putting on his coat.
"They are only two other possible suspects. Corporal Dafelmair or Brinkman," Kate says while grabbing and putting on her gun.
"No, there's three. You're forgetting Captain Fuentes. He's got a key to the par-aloft," he said while
he sees Tony getting up putting his holster on, "where do you think you're going, bubba? You've got a report to finish."

I went with Gibbs and Kate to the Captain Faul. While Gibbs and Kate are questioning him, I am writing it down again. I stand right behind Gibbs to the point I am almost leaning on his chair.

"Sergeant Fuentes was one of the finest NCOs in my command. He was tough on his riggers, but fair. Ah, I still find it difficult to believe his reporting Corporal Ramsey drove him to murder," Faul said.

"Corporal Ramsey hasn't been proven guilty yet, Captain," Kate said.

"You're holding him. Scuttle butt is he's confessed."

"Never knew a Marine captain who believed scuttle butt," Gibbs said. Gibbs grins at his own statement. Captain. Faul does not look amused. "How did you prepare the day of the exercise?"

"I spent the morning in trout talk with the naval aviators piloting the C-130," Faul said.

"The nest used a Navy bird?"

"Most of ours are deployed in Iraq."

"You each lunch with them?" Kate ask.

"At the Officer's Mess. After lunch, we had a couple of dry runs, had another [trop?] talk, and then loaded up. Why?" Faul answers her.

"Do you have your par-aloft key, Captain?" Gibbs said. After Gibbs ask Faul opens his drawer and pulls out his keychain. He displays his par-aloft key to Gibbs.

"Corporal Ramsey must have lifted Sergeant Fuentes's key long enough to make a duplicate," Gibbs said to Kate but not quietly.

"Corporal Ramsey made a key to the par-aloft," Faul said.

"It's the only way he could have slipped in to sabotage the chutes," Gibbs said while shaking hands with Faul.

"Thank you," Kate said while shaking hands with Faul as well.

"Thank you," Faul said while fiddling with keychain. "why didn't you just ask to see my key?"

"Agent Todd is new, just teaching her how to interrogate," Gibbs said while pausing at the door.

"The par-aloft was secured between 09:00 and 18:00. That's why you wanted to know what I was doing all day. You suspected me."

"If the captain were a suspect, we would have read him his rights, wouldn't we?" I said to Gibbs, playing along with what Gibbs had been doing.

"Very good, Alice, very good," Gibbs said with a smirk.

Kate grins at Cpt. Faul and follows Gibbs out. Faul watches us leave.

As we walk off the elevator onto the floor. Tony hands Gibbs his typed-up report.

"The Captain have an alibi?" Tony asks.

"He was no-where near the par-aloft when the chutes were sabotaged," Kate answers on the way to her desk.

"Ramsey's the dirt bag."

"It could still be Dafelmair or Brinkman."

"Sergeant Fuentes supervised the riggers handing out chutes," Gibbs said while reading from Tony's report.

"Yeah, he watches the riggers from the back of the truck," Tony reply's to Gibbs.

"Ramsey participated."

"Well, he's on suspension from rigging, not passing out chutes or jumping."

"He could have given Thumper a dirty chute," I theories while sitting on the edge of Gibbs desk.

"What'd you say?" Gibbs asks looking up.

"Ramsey. Could have given Thumper a sabotaged chute."

"No, you said 'dirty'."

"What?" Kate asks me and Tony.

"With Gibbs, you never know," Tony says.
Gibbs takes off quickly, having an idea. Kate, Tony and I follow in confusion.
We all go back down to Abby's lab.
"Abby, I need to see Sergeant Fuentes's reserve chute," Gibbs said to Abby as he walks into the lab and turns down the music.
"Might want to take a look at this first," Abby said to indicate to her wall monitor, "now that I'm only running one DNA analysis, I finally had time to do a particle pick on the shroud lines. You're looking at the infrared of Bolivia's best."
"Cocaine?" Tony asks.
"The killer's using?" Gibbs asks.
"No, the rock's too pure. The residue on his skin is probably from cutting and weighing" Abby said.
"Why don't I think Thumper was killed for reporting Corporal Ramsey's rigging?" Kate asks rhetorically.
"Where's Thumper's reserve chute?" Gibbs asks Abby.
"It's over here," Abby said while picking up a plastic wrapped bag, "I already checked it, Gibbs. It's clean."
"Know what, it's too clean. Too clean for someone who smashed into a tree and an SUV," Gibbs said after putting on gloves and flap of the chute, "Where's the other jump gear we confiscated." "I stored it in the Ballistics lab after I tested it."
We all go into the other room. Gibbs starts searching through the bagged chutes.
"What're you looking for?" Abby said.
"Ramsey. Dafelmair's. Brinkman's gear. Here's one," Gibbs said while moves it to make it more accessible, Abby starts cutting the plastic wrap open.
"What are you looking for?" Tony asks Gibbs.
"A screwed pooch." Abby finds and cuts open the bagged chutes of the other two guys. Gibbs starts opening them up and taking them apart to check the reserve chute tucked away inside. On the second one, he finds it.
"Here it is, it's dirty," Gibbs said while holding it up so we can read the number "13" printed on side, "this is the reserve that Thumper jumped with."
"Unlucky thirteen," Abby said.
"Someone pulled a switch after he hit the SUV." Gibbs tests the reserve chute by pulling on the pin. Nothing happens. He flips a flap and sees why.
"The cones been soldered in place. Doesn't matter if the painkillers slowed his judgement, he couldn't use this chute," Gibbs said.
"Hey, whose ruck sack is this?" Tony said while looking for the label.
Gibbs finds the label with the owner's name on it. Everyone shares a look. "Call Captain Faul. Tell him jump ops can resume, we've got our killer," Gibbs said.
"Do I tell him who?" Kate asks.
"Nope. I don't want DNA evidence, I want this bastard to confess." Kate nods and leaves to make the call.
"How we gonna do that?" Tony asks.
"Where this when we jump," Gibbs said while tossing the sabotaged chute at Tony.
"Jump?" Tony asks.
Kate and I stay in the office while Gibbs and tony jump out of the plane. When they get back we work on paper work until it is time to go home. Kate leaves first, she wants me to come but I refuse to go yet, so she leaves telling me to ring her when I am ready to go home. After a while Tony leaves after saying something about getting on the news.
Gibbs and I are quite for a while, working on the paper work before I get out of my chair and walk over to Gibbs to ask him a question. I wait for him to look at me before I ask him "can I help finishing the tree house for the victim's child?"
"How did you know about that?" Gibbs ask me without answering my question.
"I went to the funeral and his son told me about it."

"Yeah, you can help, Gibbs says with a small chuckle.

Gibbs left his phone on base while we work on the tree house, the little boy comes up with a password and we work until it is finished. Once finished Gibbs drop me off at home.
I left home early, I have to go see my military scout commander because he ask me to come in. Once I get there he asks me to help with some of the younger scouts. I was helping train them in the training course, for hours before we complete.

As I am leaving the base a girl one year younger than me, run up to me and yells, "did you hear?"

"NO, I have not heard anything, I have been on the course all morning and now I am leaving," I answers her.

"Seadog is dead. Scuttlebutt is that he is selling drugs and the basketball court is being closed because what the news is saying."

"I hope he is not selling drugs. I'll see what I can do to make sure he is not remembered as a drug dealer," once I finishes speaking, she smiles before walking away back to her training.

I call Kate and she answers after the third ring, "Todd."

"Can you pick me up from base please?" I ask her.

"Sorry, I can't I am working a case."

"It's ok I try someone else," I hang up without saying bye.

Next I try ringing Abby, see picks up straight away, "hello."

"Hey Abby are you busy?" I ask Abby.

"Nope, I am waiting for the guys to return with what I need."

"Can you pick me up from the bass?"

After telling her the bass is, she said she will be here in tweeny minutes. I read up everything the news have on seadog. Abby arrives, I get into her car and head back to the office. Once at the office I head to Gibbs desk and sit down waiting for them to get back.

An hour later Gibbs and Tony get off the lift and walk into the office. Gibbs walks over to me and says, "So you decided to show up now?"

"Sorry, I had to help my commander on bass to train some new recruit on the training course. I ask Kate to tell you," I told him without looking up from my phone with the news on it. "Is seadog a drug dealer?" I ask Gibbs.

"We don't know yet. Do you know the victim?"
"Seadog helps to train the 16 year olds for as long as I have known. He would not tarnish his name using or selling drugs. He spends all his free time trying to get kids away from the drugs," I say while liking into Gibbs eyes so he can see I am being truthful.

"OK, we will see what to do to make sure he's name is clean," he tells me while gently pushing me out of his chair. I move to sitting on the edge of his desk while looking at him waiting for him to tell me what is going on. After I went back to reading, he final looks back at me and tells me, "Were Commander Ferrell was found, down the beach bodies of a couple drug dealers was found and it is possible that the two crime is connected."

"They have closed down the basketball court has been closed because of that. Everyone on bass uses it and with it closed the kids in the area have a higher changes of using drugs and joining gangs. Please clear his name, he would never sell drugs."

"I will do what I can to make sure his name is cleared," Gibbs said with a small smile.

After a while Kate returns from wherever she was she looks pissed off. She goes on about how the boys left her at a crime scene, making her ride back with the boat.

"Well I have to see that money," Kate says after Tony tells her about the money they found with the drug dealers.

"What type of boat was he driving?" I ask Gibbs and Tony.

"A speed boat," Tony answers, "why?"

"I like boats, Seadog always went on about his boat but would not tell me about it because he says 'you would tell me everything about the boat; but to me it is a way to get out to go fishing,' so I ask you guys to know what type of boat."

The guys nod and get back to work.

I stay with the team for a while until Gibbs leaves to go talk to someone, I head out to get the needed gear to start school again the next week. I get some know books to write in and a bag because my old one is getting on.

After getting everything I need to return to school, I head to the coffee shop to get everyone on the teams' coffee and food to eat. Once I get back to the office I find that everyone but for Tony is not in the office.

"Where did everyone go?" I ask Tony while handing him his coffee and food.

"Kate is talking to people from her old job for Gibbs, and Gibbs is going on a date or something. Where have you been?" Tony answers me.

"Ok, is Abby in the lab?"

"Yes why?" Tony ask but when he looks up he finds that I have already left the room.

I get off the lift at the lab, I walk in carrying both Abby and my food and drinks. I walk over to the
computer and put the food and drinks down on the table. I find Abby in her office playing on the computer.

"Whatcha doing?" I ask her making her jump in the air.

"Don't do that. I am waiting on results," Abby explains while walking out to the lab and finding the food I place there.

We eat and talk her awhile until I get called to meet Gibbs and Tony in autopsy.

When I get down there I find not only Gibbs and Tony but also Fuller, who works for the DEA and two other males. The two males are called Frank Trujillo and Darryl Wilkins, who are rival drug dealer.

"Special Agent Gibbs. Frank Trujillo and Darryl Wilkins as requested," Fuller said.
"Over here," Gibbs said, while opening two draws "is that a glimmer of recognition I just saw?" he asks Frank before continuing, and Darryl laughs. "It seems these two belong to you."
"Good. I can slide, right?" Darryl asks
"Not if you killed them."
"I never scuffed anyone in my life," Darryl answers and this time Frank laughs.
"I'm the only one not finding anything funny here, you know why? This Naval Commander didn't die a natural death or fighting for his country. He died in a crossfire between you two dirt bags."
"I want my lawyer," Frank said.
"This was found on these two boys in the cooler. It's counterfeit. It comes from a foreign government known to support terrorism. That makes you two dirt bags suspected enemy combatants under the Patriot Act. Tony, Read them their rights and put them on the first Navy transport to Gitmo."
"You do not have the right to remain silent. You do not have the right to an attorney," Tony said to the two idoits that are the drug dealers.
"Gibbs, we don't know who counterfeited that money. Even if it does come from a country friendly to terrorists, you can't send them to Gitmo. They're U.S. citizens," Fuller whispers to Gibbs who I am standing beside so only us two head him.
"Do you understand these rights you don't have?" Tony continues.
"Watch me, Gibbs whispers back.

"Your bluff worked. Trujillo wants to talk. He really believed you'd ship him off to Gitmo," Fuller tells Gibbs as he joins as all in the office.
"The secret of a good bluff, Agent Fuller, is not to bluff," Gibbs answers as he gets up and heads to the autopsy.
"The two men on ice are brothers. Jesus and Carlos Garcia. They run two of my boats. Fishing's been poor lately because of poachers in my waters," Trujillo tells us.
"Your waters? You own the oceans, Frank" Darryl said.
"So I kept my boats in port until our little dispute… could be settled."
"I could recommend a Federal mediator, Tony said but after a beat when no one laughs he says,
"Sorry. Couldn't resist. You were saying"
"Yesterday I learned that the Garcia brothers took one of my boats out Sunday night and never came back," Trujillo said.
"Without asking you, Jefe?" Gibbs asks.
"Si. Sin mi permiso," Trujillo said in Spanish which means ', without my permission.
"You ain't ballin' no more when your marks don't ask, Frank, Darryl said with a chuckle.
"Callate, tonto! Okay?" which means 'shut up, stupid.'
"You can ride out that salsa spit, okay?"
"You believe that, Darryl?" Gibbs asks.
"There's no way he would come with real in front of my grille, Darryl answers.
"Real in front of my grille? I've got to remember that," Tony said while taking notes.
"You know what that tells me? As far as you were concerned, that boat was Trujillo's, fishing in disputed waters," Gibbs says.
"I wasn't hip to this till this narc dragged me down. Swear on my seeds, okay, we ain't whacked them," Darryl answers.
"He's not lying to you. He didn't kill them," Darryl said.
"Hey, this is good, Tony. You've got two rival dirt bags vouching for each other. You think Garcia charted out Frank's boat to some sports fisherman from Iowa?" Gibbs said while I walk up behind him from my spot against the door.
"Would they want to do anything illegal" I ask Gibbs while tying my hair back.
"No, no. They were probably hauling drug smugglers," Gibbs answers with a smile and small laugh.
"Or illegal," Tony adds.
"Or run guns. Did we miss any potential charter?"
"I've told you everything I know. Can I go now," Trujillo says before then finishing the question in Spanish "por favor?"
"Yeah. Sure. Once we have the boat. Help me out here, Darryl."
"He's got GPS locators in all his boats," Darryl tells Gibbs.
"Now why didn't you tell us that, Frank?"
"I like to handle my own problems," Trujillo answers Gibbs.
"Not this time. This one is ours."
"May I use your phone?"
"Yep," Gibbs says as he hands the phone over. Trujillo talks on the phone for some time, when he gets off the phone Gibbs asks, "What's the name of the boat?"

We all head out to the car and get to the dock where the boat, Tony and Gibbs board the boat while I stand on the dock.

"Can Tony sniff for drugs now?" Fuller asks.
"Tony?" Tony asks.
"Some coincidence, huh?"
"The deck's been hosed but there's blood residue. Get me some swabs, DiNozzo. I'll start in the cabin," Gibbs says to Tony.
"Bet he's a real stud," Tony said to Fuller.
"He's neutered," Fuller tells Tony, while Gibbs enters the cabin.

Tony starts the boat and then yells "Oh, hell! What kind of engine is in this thing?"
"Drug runner special. A blown Five Oh Two putting out eight hundred horses," Fuller informs Tony.
"Main cabin's a mess. Blood stains. Bullet holes. Found some bloody bandages on the bunks. One of them's hurting," Gibbs tells Tony as he exits the main cabin.
"Can I search for drugs?"
"We're just getting started. What you can do is check with the marina office. See if they paid a mooring fee. Strike out at that and start canvassing the marina and find out if somebody..." Gibbs says but fuller cuts him off saying.
"Gibbs, I'm a Federal Agent. I know who and what to ask."
"I keep forgetting you're not a dog walker."
"Uh, that's very funny. Come on, Tony," Fuller says and then whistles making Tony the dog bark and follow him.
"Wow. They should have hosed down in here," Tony yells from the main cabin.
"They did just enough to avoid attracting attention of someone walking by," Gibbs tells Tony.
"We're going to be bagging and tagging for hours," Tony says as he exits the main cabin and comes to stand at the back of the boat looking over the seen at a boat of two girls in bikinis, "if I only had the time.'
"What?" Gibbs ask Tony.
"You got the time? My watch is slow."
"You going somewhere DiNozzo?"
"Yeah, back to work."

"Gibbs what do you need me to do?" I asks Gibbs.

"You want to go us some coffee please?" Gibbs ask me, and I leave out to get the coffee while Gibbs and Tony got to work.

"...but Jenny and Nancy were very helpful," Fuller explain to Gibbs and tony what he had found.
"Jenny and Nancy?" I ask with my head cocked to the side like a puppy.
"The girls on the sloop over there. They're sailing that beauty all the way down the Intercostal Waterway to Miami for her owner."

"All the way to Miami..." Tony starts to say but Gibbs cuts him off.
"They're going to be there by the time you tell me how they were helpful," Gibbs says.
"When they docked yesterday, there was someone on this boat."
"Did you get a description?"
"Late twenties. Glasses. Short hair. Gay or low on testosterone. They waved. He ignored them."
"No way," Tony said with a surprised look on his face.
"That's what I said," Fuller said.
"What did they say?" I ask.
"They had a couple of cell phones. When he wasn't making calls, he was working a laptop. About one, Jenny started grilling some prawns. By the way, they're Aussies."
"Aussies! I love Aus," Tony said but when he sees Gibbs face he says "...so Jenny was grilling prawns?"
" Saw a white van pull up here. The guy with the glasses was really excited to see the driver. She said they hugged a lot."
"Gay."
"They describe the driver?" Gibbs asks.
"Same look as glasses without the glasses. They brought some heavy suitcases from the boat to the van. Then they helped a third guy with a bandaged leg to the van. He must have been in the cabin the whole time. Then they drove off."
"Any more on the van, other than the color?"
"Nope. I tried. All they could remember was that it was white, Fuller said then after a minute asks, "can Tony sniff the boat now?"
"It's all yours."
Gibbs and I walk away while Tony talks to Fuller. When tony catches up to us he says, "I'm telling you, boss, Aussie chicks are definitely different from American chicks. A guy's even got to approach them differently. I'd have got more than the color of the van out of them."
"I know I'm going to regret this, DiNozzo. Follow up on Fuller's interview," Gibbs tells tony, before he is even finished speaking Tony is gone.
Gibbs and I get into the office to see Kate already there.

"Hey, get anything from your friend?" Gibbs asks Kate.
"Yep," Kate said.

"You disappoint me, Kate," Gibbs says when he sees Fornell sitting in his chair at his desk.
"Me too, Gibbs. I thought she knew better than to trade down. Oh. Is this yours?" Fornell asks while pointing at the seat he is sitting in.
"You need to seriously rethink your definition of the word 'friend.'"
"If I were in Marcy's shoes, I would have done the same thing," Kate says.

"Gibbs she thinks I am her friend still and I up her shirts so everyone can see her breasts once," I whisper in Gibbs' ear once he has sitting down.
"Careful, Agent Todd. You're running out of job options," Fornell said to Kate while looking at me like he was working out what I had said.
"So I once again have the pleasure of your company, Agent Fornell. We're into more than phony Franklins and dead drug dealers," Gibbs asks Fornell.
"Much more. Those serial numbers match the batch of bogus bills passed by Nine Eleven hijackers. Your killers aren't drug dealers, they're terrorists."

Gibbs and Fornell leaves to talk to the FBI leader.

Gibbs, Fornell, Kate and I all stand watching the facial recognition, when it got the hit Gibbs asks,
"You know him?"
"No," Kate answers.
"His name is Saudi. Same as most of the Nine Eleven hijackers," Fornell said to Gibbs.
"What's the red star?" I ask from behind Gibbs.
"Active case with a high priority. He's one of the foreign terrorists wanted for the U.N. bombing in Baghdad. Believed to have slipped out of Iraq through Syria three weeks ago. Whereabouts unknown."
"Not anymore," Gibbs said.
"It works!" Tony yells making the four of us to see what the hell he is on about, "I had Jenny and Nancy grill some prawns. They don't call them shrimp in Australia. Sip a really nice chardonnay with a wonderful bouquet. I didn't drink… just sniffed."
"What the hell is he ranting about?" Fornell asks.
"I should have known better," Gibbs said instead of answering Fornell.
"No, no, no, boss! I had the girls do exactly what they were doing when the white panel van pulled in to jog their memory. It worked! They remembered the driver was wearing a company uniform," Tony tells Gibbs while putting his stuff at his desk.
"Water Company? Phone company?" I ask.
"Jefferson Power? Vantage Cable?" Gibbs adds
"Milkman. Bread man. Hell, that white van could be from any of a hundred different commercial, county or state outfits," Fornell says.
"It's a start."

"I'm not done! I pulled this videotape from the security camera at the Mobil station on the road out of the marina," Tony tells us.
"Wow, that's really smart, Tony," Kate says.
"Any guy could have done it."
"Guy? Learn to shut up when you're ahead."
"What time did the girls say they saw the van?" Gibbs says.
"Ah, around thirteen hundred," Gibbs says.
"Are we submitting to the Sundance Film Festival?" Abby asks as she joins us all.
"Best terrorist film category," Tony says.
"Sweet. So, if anyone's interested. The only prints off the boat I did match were the druggies in the cooler."
"Not the Commander?" Gibbs asks.
"Nugatory."
"We've got a match on a terrorist," Kate tells us all.
"You didn't tell me that," Tony says.
"Who could get a word in?"
"I ran those prints through the Bureau. I got nada," Abby tells us, like she is asking how.
"You did not have access to the full database," Gibbs tells her.
"You're holding out on us. That is not nice."
"Whoa! There it is!" Gibbs says from looking at Tony video attracting everyone's attention.
"Yep," Tony says.
"Run it back. Jefferson Power. God damn it. Can anybody read that number?"
"Eight three one."
"They've got to be going after the power grid," Kate says.
"I found traces of C-Four in the stuff you bagged on the boat," Abby informs us.
"Thank god. They're just going to try to blow something up. We've been sweating terrorists hacking into our power grid distribution software. That could shut down half the country. C-Four indicates a hard target... a power plant, which are all under tight security. Which is about to get a hell of a lot tighter," Fornell said.
"There's a good chance that driver works for Jefferson Power," Gibbs says.
"I hope he does. We'll have him before sundown," tells us while ringing someone on the phone and saying, "terrorist alert. APB on Jefferson Power Company van number eight three one. I want to know where it's based, who is driving it and I want it in five minutes," then to us he says "thanks. You've all done a terrific job."

"I feel like I just kissed my sister," Tony said.
"I didn't know you had a sister, Tony," Abby says.

"You are not missing anything. Trust me," I tell Tony, making Kate attempt to hit me but I move fully behind Gibbs.
"I don't. I'm fantasizing," Tony says while smiling at what I said.
"I need music to do that," Abby said.

"Me too," I say with a jump while Abby walks away with a smile.
"Fornell's got target fixation," Gibbs informs us.
"Come again," Kate said.
"It's when a fighter pilot gets so fixed on his target that he flies right into it," I explain to Kate without looking at her.
"Ah. Like you and men?" Kate asks me, everyone see the death glare that comes her way.

"At least I have never screwed a coworker and then got him killed," I say with a sickly sweet voice and smile.
"That August blackout was caused by a tree falling on some power lines, right?" Gibbs says to get us off this topic.
"Something like that," Kate said.
"Ah hell, these guys don't need C-Four. An ax will do!"
"Okay, here's the timeline for the August fifteen blackout," Kate said while looking it up and the internet.
"Put it on the plasma, Kate."
"It started at Eastlake, Ohio, at fourteen hundred, and by the time it reached Indian Point in Buchanan, New York, all the Northeast and most of Canada was dark."
"Pull the state's power grid up off the Internet," Gibbs tells her and she finds a map if what to do to make a blackout of power.
"Whoa! Look at this!"
"It says three key failures in Virginia could cascade until every state from here to the Rockies is dark," I ask, looking a bit scared.
"Yeah, more than says. It shows how! Wait. Take down those three flashing nodes simultaneously and you take out the entire Eastern Power Grid."
"All we have to do is stop them from taking out one?" Gibbs ask while quickly looking over at me to make sure I am ok, I give him a small smile.
"It looks that way. I mean, if any two fail at the same time, the slack can be picked up. There will be blackouts, but it won't cascade."
"Well, which one do we go for?" Tony asks.
"Closest one. Right here," Gibbs says while grabbing his gear.

I wait in the office for everyone to return from saving us from a blackout. When they get back Kate finishes her paper work while I wait.

"Gibbs," I say from my sit across from him.
"Yes," he answers.
"I cannot come in next week in the morning until 1500 hours."

He looks up at me and ask "why?"

By this time Kate and Tony are watching us, I answer, "hell starts again."

"Hell?"

"School? Hell? Is there a different?"

"Ok, have fun."

"I would refer remove my heart with a toothpick. But hey how bad can having you soul remove be?"

"Hate it that much?" he asks with a smile before returning to his paperwork.

Chapter End Notes

Comments and reviews will be great thanks.
NOTE: I apologies for not writing for so long. Life got busy and I lost the ability to write enough to post another chapter. So sorry.

... 

I walk into the NCIS headquarters at the end of the school day, wearing the school, I walk over to Gibbs desk and put down the coffee I am carrying like I have every day since I started school again.

"What are you doing, Alice?" Kate asks me without looking up from her paperwork.

"I am waiting for something fun to happen or for the right moment to flash your boobs again," I answers where liking through my bag for my day clothe.

Once I have found my day clothe that is a pair of flare bottom pants, and a white elbow length shirt, I leave the office and walk into the lady room and change out of my uniform before Tony gets anymore ideas in his head from seeing it.

I walk back into the ball pen to hear Gibbs reading of his computer with Kate and Tony standing around him, "The body was in the water less than twenty-four hours. NAS Key west tagged and bagged and shipped it over," Gibbs says while walking into the office.

"We have and I.D?" Tony asks.

"Seaman Russell MacDonald. Nineteen. Assigned to the USS Foster."

"Destroyer. Spruance Class," Kate said.

"Hey, look at that! New kid on the block's been doing her homework," Gibbs says while looking up at Kate before standing up and walking over to the big screen to point out on the map as he spoke, "USS Foster left Roosevelt Roads Naval Station two days ago en route to Norfolk. This is her position now. The body was found here, in the Bahamas."

"Roosevelt Roads?" Tony asks with a happy look on his face.

"Yeah," Gibbs said with an expatiated look on his face.

"That's Puerto Rico."

"Yeah," Gibbs repeats.

"I love Puerto Pico."

"I'm glad."

"No boss, you don't understand. I love Puerto Rico."

"You been there a lot?" Kate cuts in.

"No! No, that's just it. I've never been there! I mean, I'm so wanting to go ever since I was kid! I so wanting..." Tony rambles on, before looking at Gibbs face before saying, "Sorry. I just always."

"Wanted to go," Gibbs finished for him.
"Yeah," Tony said.

"Sometime night before last, Seaman MacDonald went overboard," Gibbs continued on with what he was saying before again.

"Anyone see or hear anything?" I ask from behind Tony and Kate making them almost jump out of their skin.

"No. Didn't know he was missing until he failed to report for duty."

"Anything in the medical?"

"We'll get all that when we get on board. Anything else unusual?"

The four of us walk into Autopsy after a very boring ride in the elevator.

"This is exactly how he was found," Ducky says while walking over to the body dressed in dress whites, with us on the other side of the body.

"Dress whites? Why?" Tony asks Ducky.

"No one knows. There were no formal event scheduled," Gibbs answers him while looking over the body.

"The sword?" Kate asks.

"Officer's ceremonial."

"Our man's enlisted," Tony says.

"Yeah. Doesn't make much sense, does it?"

"Here's something else for the mystery tour," Ducky said while removing the sword from the protective cover, "This so-called ceremonial sword is sharp enough to slit someone's throat. Do you know why they drive on the left hand side of the road in England?"

"Dates back to medieval times. Most people were, and still are, right handed. It allowed them to slash at one another when passing on horseback. Ha! Now why, you might ask, doesn't this hold true for the rest of Europe?" I take over for Ducky when he stopped for breath making everyone give me different levels of confused and surprise that I know all of that.

"That is right," Ducky said once he got over his surprise, "and how do you know all of that?"

"I spent a year in London, it was the only time I liked going to hell daily," I say while looking closer at the sword.

"Why the chains on the waist?" Kate asks before I can talk about it more.

"Ah… these," Ducky says while lifting up heave looking weights, "these where attached to it," he puts it back down, "each twenty five pounds. Now whether he put them on himself or someone did it for him, that much weight sent him down fast. Well, if you'll excuse me, I'll get our poor seaman out of his wet clothe."

"You're not going to say, 'and into a dry martini,' are you?" Tony asks.
"No. No, we'll save that for later... for me, I'm afraid."

We all walk back into the elevator and wait for the doors to close before Gibbs informs Tony, "the seaman was local. Address is in the file. You don't have to the dirty deed. CACO already notified next of kin."

"Why me, Boss? Wouldn't a woman be more sympathetic?" Tony asks Gibbs.

"That's why Kate is going with you."

"I'm sure Tony can handle it alone," Kate cuts in.

"I'm not," I speak up beside Gibbs without looking up from the file I am reading.

"When did an order turn into a debate?" Gibbs question as the elevator arrives in the ball pen.

While Kate and Tony talk to the victim's mother I work on my homework in the hopes of finishing it before we leave, so that when we go I don't have to worry about it when we get back or for the rest of the weekend.

I easily finish off the paper I have to do on world wars, and start on the math homework that I have to finish.

I swear it is like the teachers think all you want to do is work, and that each one is the only person you are working for to get a good grade.

We all fly onto the US Foster and are met by the Master Chief Morrie.

"The Commander's on a call with LANT fleet, Sir. He'll catch up with you as soon as he can," the Master Chief said while leading as off the flight deck.

"We appreciate it, Master Chief," Gibbs said while carrying serval bags.

"Did you have any contact with Seaman MacDonald?" Tony asks the Master Chief.

"Can't say I did, Sir. Kept pretty much to himself," the Master Chief answers as he walks under a low door making him have to duct down.

"Seems to be the general consensus. Or the party line," Gibbs tells him.

"We've got you set up in the CO's quarters. It's small, but it's private and secure," the Master Chief said while standing outside the doorway to the room, before knocking on the door then.

"Enter," the man inside yells out.

"Lieutenant Commander Robbins, Agent Gibbs," the Master Chief introduce the two men after opening the door.

"Appreciate you giving up your..." Gibbs begins to say.
"Not a problem," Robbins cut Gibbs off while walking out the door.

"NCIS is always welcome aboard, Sir. You can expect excellent cooperation," the Master Chief said in the tone of voice on uses when reading a script for the millionth time.

"I appreciate that, Master Chief," Gibbs tells him while putting down his bags and getting gear out.

"If you need anything," the Master Chief continued in the same tone of voice.

"Oh, I won't hesitate," when Gibbs finished this the master chief left the room and closed the door behind him because it was obvious that he is not needed anymore.

"Now why didn't that sound sincere?" Kate asks while pointing over to the door.

"Ah, you get used to it. They either stonewall or kiss ass. To them we're the internal affairs of the Navy," Gibbs tells her.

"So basically they hate us," Kate says.

"No," Tony says but after a heartbeat he adds, "Pretty much."

"What are you on about Kate, you should be used to that by now. Everyone hates you eventually," I say while moving closer to Kate for my next strike.

"Ha, ha you are so funny," she responds while moving away from me.

"Set up the laptop and establish a feed from NCIS," Gibbs cuts in while grabbing my arm and pulling me away from Kate before I can do anything to her.

"I'm on it," Tony says while casting a glance at me next to Gibbs.

"We're not all sleeping here, are we? Together?" Kate ask while looking around at the room.

"I'll take the couch," Gibbs say while glancing at said coach.

"What is the problem Kate, afraid that Tony will find out that you snore?" I ask Kate without moving around Gibbs to lead on the wall.

Gibbs and I walk to the enlisted quarters to look over the victim's bed for any clues on what the hell is going on.

"Afternoon, gentlemen," Gibbs said to the other men in the room.

"Afternoon, sir," a men by the name of Carnahan said in return.

"Okay, let's dispense with the small talk. Which one is his bunk," Gibbs asks before looking at the man and saying, "Petty Officer Carnahan?"

"Below mine, sir."

"Thanks, Petty officer. Did you know MacDonald?" I ask while Gibbs pulls apart the bunk.

"Not well. He pretty much kept to himself," Carnahan answers.

"Kept to himself," Gibbs and I overlaps with him before Gibbs saying, "Did he like to listen to
music? Like to read?"

"I really didn't notice, sir."

"Your bunk is right above his, but you didn't notice?" I ask him.

"I'm a private kind of person."

"Well, if you had to venture a wild guess, Carnahan, what do you think MacDonald like to do?" Gibbs asks.

"Spend his life at work."

"Computers run the weapons systems," a young man by the name of Young informs Gibbs and me.

After Gibbs and I finish searching the bunk we meet Kate and Tony on the deck of the ship to discuss what we have learnt from talking to the different people we talked too.

"A dead kid wearing dress whites for no reason, with a sword he shouldn't have on, which is not supposed to be sharp, at the bottom of the ocean, with weights on," Tony said telling us what we already know.

"He as a brilliant but troubled computer tech, who lived at work, and had a mysterious friend," Kate read out.

"Okay, so given the circumstances, probably not an accidental death. So… suicide or murder?" Gibbs said while walking between Kate and Tony.

"The O.C. suggests he could have killed himself," Tony jumped in.

"The corpsman he confided in and his mother are adamant he never would have," Kate said.

"Something else to consider. I found this in Seaman MacDonald's rack," Gibbs said while holding up an evidence bag with a book on how to sword fight, "You know that razor sharp sword he was wearing? He was teaching himself how to use it."

We are all back in the room we are staying in and on a video call with Abby.

"We found a couple more things on MacDonald's body. Um… he was walking this around his neck," Kate said before holding up a saint Christopher medal, "Just your average Saint Christopher medal. But here's what's really odd. He had this in his pocket. My guess is it's some sort of character charter for a fantasy game."

"What time of game?" Tony asks her.

"It looks like M.M.O.R.P.G."

"M.M what?"

"M.M.O.R.P.G," I say to him in the tone of voice on would use on a little child who just a dumb question.
"It's a massive multi-player online role playing game. They're huge on the internet," Abby expand to everyone.

"And a Character charter would be what?" Gibbs asks from the seat in front of the computer which we were talking to Abby on.

"It's like a character's manifesto. His goals, moral stance, creed," I answer Gibbs before Abby could, making everyone look at me.

"You're kidding me."

"No, they really get into this stuff. There can be like thousands of players on site alone," Abby said to us with big hand movements.

"Well, that's comforting to know that Russell's computer skills where put to good use on a billion dollar ship."

"Oh, he's a computer geek? computer geek?"

"Yeah, worked in the Combat Information Centre," Tony cuts in.

"That's is a perfect gig for a power gamer."

"Well, he was working on combat, it was just more like the medieval kind," I cut in.

"How do you know this stuff?" Tony asks me while everyone looks at me waiting for the answer. I just smile at Tony and then look back at Abby.

"Abby, Alice, are this games violent?" Gibbs asks getting us back to the case.

"Well, there's poisoning," Abby starts, "thievery, stabbing, decapitations, the occasional garrotte," Abby and I listed off, while swopping between us two.

"I'd say that's violent," Tony said while looking between Abby and me.

"What should we look for on his hard drive?" Gibbs asks.

"If he's good, he won't leave any footprints," Abby tells him.

"So where's the evidence if there is evidence?"

"Cyberspace," Kate said.

"Look who thinks she knows something? Who told you that? The girly guy?" I ask Kate.

"He is not girly," she screams at me.

"He wears more make up then a street corner whore."

"Theoretically," Abby said while Kate looks at me like she was trying to kill me.

"Can you find it?" Gibbs asks Abby.

"Maybe. These gaming sites are run by anonymous server clients in every country on the planet."

"MacDonald's file didn't show any foreign language skills, you're probably looking for something run in English," Kate cut in.
"That's good."

"The machines are state of the art. Think government excess," Tony tells her.

"Well, that'll eliminate the weekenders, and the lo-fi guys. I mean, I'll give it a shot, you know. Oh, the sword."

"What about it?" Gibbs ask.

"The blade has nicks in it. Contact with hard metal."

"Another sword?" Tony asks

"It's possible."

"Two sailors playing with sharp swords," Gibbs stated.

"Once in a while you might miss. I'm on it," Kate said while walking out of the door.

"How come the sailors get all the fun? I'm not allowed to play with swords, am I boss?" I speak up.

"Abby, have fun with your M.M.R.O.P.G," Gibbs said while ignoring me, and the ending the video call without saying goodbye. Tony give Gibbs a look so he says with raised eyebrows, "What?"

"M.M.O.R.P.G," Tony informs him while walking to the other side of Gibbs while I sit on the coach beside Gibbs chair.

"Thank you."

"You're welcome."

"Can I talk to Ducky now?"

"Yeah."

Gibbs puts a call through to Ducky and the first thing we see is the inside of the victim as Ducky does the autopsy.

"Ah," Tony says when he sees it, "you might want to warn us about what you're working on after lunch Ducky."

"Yes, I suppose gazing directly into an exposed digestive system doesn't aid the actual process," Ducky says.

"Not after the meal we just had."

"Yes, I'm sorry about that, my friend, but sometimes gaining valuable insight requires suffering small indignities. I recall one case, a young woman, not much older than yourself. She ingested…" Ducky starts telling a story, "a small piece of jewellery."

"Ducky," Gibbs said.

"Yes," Ducky said, not at all fazed by Gibbs cutting his story off.

"What have we got?"

"Oh, uh… anoxia, sea water in the stomach, foam in the trachea."
"Classic death by drowning," Tony surmises.

"A slight haemorrhaging of the inner ear, possibly caused by the rapid shift in pressure," Ducky continued like Tony hadn't spoken.

"Because he sank so fast," Gibbs surmised.

"That's correct. Ah, then here we have dirt. Yes, his fingers grabbed whatever he was touching when he succumbed. There's a good chance Abby will deduce the dirt came from the ocean floor."

"Which means?" I asks.

"Seaman MacDonald was alive when he went into the sea."

Gibbs and I walk to the bridge to talk to the Skipper.

"We're taking care of you, I trust," River said to us.

"Very nicely, Skipper," Gibbs said.

"I didn't know the boy very well."

"No one did, it seems."

"He was doing some maintenance work on my computer last week. He seemed to be in a bit of a daze. So I had a Corpsman administer a drug test. He was clean."

"The toxicology test we gave him came up negative," I say while looking up from the book I am using to take notes on what is being said.

"What do you make of the uniform, the sword and all?"

"I'm not sure. But we think he was involved in an online fantasy game," Gibbs says.

"Like an M.M.O.R.P.G?"

"Yeah."

"My children play. A lot."

"We think he might have taken it a step further and staged real fights with someone on board."

"On board? How would that be possible?"

"Well, skipper, I'm sure you know the ship better than anyone else under your command."

"Inside and out, agent Gibbs."

"So if you wanted to stage a sword fight with another shipmate and not get caught?"

"Damage Control in the machine shop at night."

"Gibbs, good guess MacDonald got his sword at Roosevelt Roads. If he was sword fighting with
someone, they probably bought it there, too," Tony tells us as he run up to us on the deck.

Before Gibbs can answer what Tony just said, his phone starts ring from Abby, "Yeah," he answers the phone with.

"I found the site MacDonald frequented. He was playing this character, Weylin," Abby tells Gibbs over the phone.

"Like the singer?"

"More like the mystical half elf warrior Weylin. Spelled W.E.Y.L.I.N. That charter we found on MacDonald's body it referred to his mail rival, Kinvaras. Their main mode of combat was parley."

"Abby?"

"Sword fight. Oh, and here's the big one."

"Fine, whoop me."

"The guy who plays Kinvaras logs on from the Foster. The same ship you're in," after hearing this Gibbs hangs up on Abby.

"Who would have thought that Pong would turn into online role playing games?" Gibbs asks the two of us with him, while a door opens behind him.

"Pong?" Tony asks him in return.

"Yeah, the first video game. What are the odds of Seaman MacDonald's character…"

"Weylin."

"Fighting online in…"

"The immortals," I tell him from the right of him while Tony is standing on his left.

"Another seaman's character…"

"Uh… Kinvaras?" Tony asks instead of saying with confidence.

"And both of them are on the same destroyer?"

"About the same as seaman MacDonald being found at the bottom of the sea with chains around his waist."

"Sounds like something that should happen in the game."

"Beheading is more likely."

"Why do they use such weird names?"

"When you're a computer geek invading dungeons and fighting ogres, Jethro doesn't cut it," Tony said and then looked at Gibbs who is giving him an 'are you kidding' look, so he added, "Neither does Tony or Alice."

"Don't bring me into this," I say while looking away from the sky line to look Tony in the eyes.

We walk into the passageway and towards to the room we are staying in.
"Seaman MacDonald bought an officers' sword and was teaching himself how to use it. I think he found out who else on board was role-playing…"

"Kinvaras," Tony said for him.

"And decided to take it to the next level. Reality."

"Well, Boss, if they both had to have swords, chances are they bought them at the Navy Exchange in Puerto Rico. I could help there, make an undercover purchase of a sword, bust the clerk, and swap the bust for info on who bought the sword for the ship. I'll be there and back in twenty four hours."

"Six."

"Twelve."

"This is not a negotiation, DiNozzo."

"Six," Tony said while tripping over the knee knocker before running back to the deck to fly off to find what we need to know.

"You do know you are going to live to regret that, right?" I ask Gibbs while we start walking again.

"Yeah, but I hope not," Gibbs tells me.

Once Kate returns to the room to the three of us head down to the machine room to look for evidence of a fight down there. After a while looking at the room for a while before Gibbs finds a nick in the metal beam.

"Hey, look at these marks," Gibbs said making Kate and I walk over to look at it.

"More here," Kate says after looking around at other poles. "These are about two sword-lengths from the cuts in the other one. MacDonald and Kinvaras were starting to take their game very seriously."

"We don't know that yet."

"Well, I checked all the other swords… and there wasn't a scratch on any of them."

"Abby has not concluded that the other metal that MacDonald's sword came in contact with came from another sword."

"Then why did you send Tony to Puerto Rico?"

"Besides to get him to shut up," I cut in from another wall where there are small nicks as well.

"It's called being thorough. Hunches do not hold up in court," Gibbs informs us.

"And not just a hunch. Two people stated that he wasn't prone to suicide," Kate said in the victims defence.

"Why are you pushing this, Kate?" Gibbs asks Kate while getting in her face.

"Because it makes sense. He's catholic."
"Hmm. And so are you, two. You cannot let personal situations colour you judgment."

"Oh, why do you NCIS blokes have to bring me into everything today?" I asks while walking over to her.

"I don't. But you hired me because of my knowledge and my experience. You've never seen how a suicide can tear up a catholic family. They take it very seriously," Kate said to Gibbs.

"Here I through you got the job by fucking Gibbs in the bathroom on air force one," I spoke up again while moving to stand next to Kate.

"I didn't fuck Gibbs," Kate screeches at me.

"Oh that's right, he is still living so you couldn't have fucked him," I say with a big smile like I was talking about the weather and not my sister's sex life.

"Somehow I don't think this guy's the Catechism type," Gibbs said while getting back on topic but I didn't miss the small smile he had on his face.

"He was wearing a Saint Christopher medal when they found him. Even the most hardened criminals wouldn't cross that line, it's part of the culture," Kate said to him with a serious look on her face.

Gibbs phone then ring, "Gibbs," is how he answers her phone.

"Hey, it's me," Tony said through the phone.

"Hey, your ears must have been burning. It better not be from the tropical sun."

"Uh… here's what I have."

"Hang on. The reception's not good here. Let me see if I can get to a better spot, Gibbs told DiNozzo before he turned to Kate and me and said, "Its DiNozzo. I'm going to go up top – see if I can get a better signal," and he then left the room.

Kate and I finish taking photos of all the nicks in the room and then we head back into the room we are staying in.

We start going through the piles of metical files to see which one is on both this list and look like the description Tony got.

"Yeah! This one matches the description Tony gave us," Gibbs said while looking at a file.

"Name's not on the list of suspicious injuries at sick bay. How many people on this boat?" Kate asks him.

"This ship has three hundred and twenty three enlisted, thirty two officers. You luck this isn't an aircraft carrier."

"How the hell do you now that? Do you spend your free time learning for the ships?" I ask Gibbs while grabbing the next file to look at.

"What?" Gibbs asks Kate after she hums out something but doesn't answer me like normal.

"Petty Officer Ronald Zuger cut his arm on a plate glass window last month. Only there were no
"Matches the description?"

"To a tee. Guess where he works?"

Kate and I are waiting in the room that we are staying in, for Gibbs to finish interrogating Zuger.

"Hello, NCIS this is Gibbs phone. He is unable to answers or talk at the moment but if you leave a message, I will give it to him at the next possible moment," I answer Gibbs phone, when it rings.

"That's very official," Abby said from the other side of the phone, "Gibbs isn't answering his phone. Where is he?"

"Having a talk with Kinvaras," I tell her, "And I would have said hello Abby if Gibbs had your number in your phone, but the second you are done I will put it in."

"Well, if he's anywhere near as whacked out as his rival, tell Gibbs to watch his neck."

"Yeah, that's not happen? You got into MacDonald's diary? What type of guy keeps a diary?"

"This guy had diarrhoea of the keyboard. It's going to take me a while to get through it."

"Kate while do it."

"Cool," Abby said before hanging up the phone.

"Hey Kate, got a job for you," I tell her while getting the email Kate sent us off the computer, "Read all this and see who the victim really was."

"You volunteered me to this? There are over 70 chapters," Kate says while throwing her pen down on to the table.

"Yeah, and Gibbs will more or likely what it the second he is done."

Gibbs finished talking to Zuger, then talked to the O.C. after talking to the C.O. Ducky then called Gibbs, while coming back into the room. Kate, Tony and I are sitting around.

"There are signs the victim struggled, and our only suspect has an iron-clad alibi," Gibbs informs us.

"Sure looks like a suicide to me," Tony alleged.

"I don't think it's that simple," Kate cuts in.

"You are letting your personal experience get in the way here," Gibbs expressed.

"No, I'm not talking about his religious morals. Okay, I've been reading this diary for hours. I mean, MacDonald gives no indication on his mission. It's just the opposite, in fact."

"Go on."

"MacDonald seems resolved to continue his battle with Kinvaras after he leaves the ship. So why would a man so intent on his mission, no matter how deranged, off himself and end it?"
"What else is in his diary?"

"I'm on the last entry right now."

"Get me Petty Officer Zuger's records now."

"I'm on it," Tony said while grabbing out his phone and calling someone, "I need Petty Officer Zuger records now," Tony said while staring out the three of us.

"What?" Gibbs and I ask at the same time.

"Aren't you the least bit interested to know what I brought you back from Puerto Rico?"

"No," Gibbs answers him.

"Listen to this," Kate said while moving closer to me and Gibbs.

"Hey, yeah," Tony says into the phone.

"MacDonald says that after he makes his escape, he'll destroy his enemies by releasing a great plague against the realm as the sun sets beneath the next full moon."

"Files on the way," Tony said once he ends the call.

"Plague? Plague. There it is. MacDonald had applied for the NBC program," Gibbs says.

"Nuclear, Biological and Chemical weapons."

"Passed the physical, flunked the psych."

"So what's the realm he's talking about?" Tony asks Kate.

"I think it's the Foster. MacDonald was convinced that the crew was aiding his enemy," Kate answers him while flipping the pages of the dairy.

"He's going to set a bio bomb off on this ship. Tell me it's not a full moon tonight," Gibbs said.

"Sorry, Gibbs it is a full moon tonight," I tell him while walking around the room.

"What time does the sun set?"

"Twenty three thirty seven Zulu."

"About an hour from now," Kate says after me when Tony looks slightly lost.

"Get Zuger in front of this computer and see if he can find out anything about MacDonald or a bio weapon in that game site. Navy ship do not carry bio-chemical weapons nor would they have the material to make them," Gibbs tells me before turning to Kate and saying, "Contact Reynolds and notify security. He'll know if there's anything unaccounted for in this region."

The second Gibbs is finished talking we all run off to do our thing.

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"Stay on him every five minutes," Gibbs tells her while looking over his shoulder at us.

"He expressly told me to wait for his call."

"I expressly don't give a damn. Ride his ass."

Kate walks away to do as he is told while Gibbs and I continual to the combat information centre to talk to Tony and Zug. 

"No! He can't do this!" Zug yells at the time Gibbs and I walk into the room, while looking at his computer.

"What's going on?" Gibbs asks.

"I'm not sure?" Tony tells us when he hears Gibbs.

"Weylin hacked me. Kinvaras is gone," Zug says when the computer beeps at him.

"Is MacDonald covering his tracks?"

"You listen to me very closely. There's a good chance a bio bomb is going off on this ship by sunset. Right now you're the best shot we've got to find it. You give me answers or I will make sure you are the last person in line on the evac. Did MacDonsl even hint, in any way, of taking out this crew? Gibbs says while getting in Zugers face.


"Go over MacDonald's diary again. Maybe we missed something. I want to know every detail that happened just between you and MacDonald," Gibbs says. The second he is finished talking I sit down at a random computer and pull up MacDonald's diary to have a look because a fresh set of eyes never hurt anyone.

"We've got a little more than twenty minutes, Zug. What is it you're not telling me?" Gibbs yells at Zug while throwing him against the desk I am working on. "Do you want the crew of this ship to die?"

"He was crazy, you know. He really thought he was immortal," Zug yells at Gibbs in fear.

"He thought you were Kinvaras, didn't he? That's why you fought with real sword," I cut into the conversation.

"I thought we were just playing the game. And then he tried to kill me."

"So you killed him?" Gibbs and I asks at the same time.

"No! I didn't… I just challenged him!"

"Challenged him to what?" Gibbs shouts at him.

"To go U.A. like he was always talking about! I told him to take his sword and swim to shore!"

"Why was he wearing weights if he was going to swim?" I asks while looking at him like he has two heads and neither is very smart.

"Why did he have weights chained to his waisted?" Gibbs yells after a few seconds of him not speaking.
"I told him that was the only way he could prove to me he was immortal," Zuger informs us.

"Why would you let him do that?" Gibbs question him.

"To win," I say for him with descanted in my voice.

"This isn't helping us. What is in those diaries?"

"I've been over them twice," Kate tells them.

"Well, go over them again, Kate," Gibbs yells before leaving the room.

"I'm missing something. I know I am. How much time?" I speak up for the first time in over half an hour of which me and Kate has been going over the dairies.

"A little over five minutes," Tony tells me while Kate walks over to see what bit I am reading.

"This stuff MacDonald said about cutting off the head so the body will die. We're assuming that's a part of setting off a 'plague against the realm.' But what if it meant two separate things."

"Okay."

"Zuger's website and his character were destroyed. And the plague against the realm could simply be referring to a computer virus."

"So he's talking about the crew when he refers to cutting off the heads so the body will die."

"That's what I'm thinking."

"Who's the 'head' of the crew?" Tony asks before all of us exchange a look and then run out of the room and down the hallway.

We run to the captain's cabin before we all run in.

"Is there some kind of NCIS protocol," the skipper starts asking before Kate cuts him off.

"It's not the boat," Kate says.

"It's a ship," Gibbs tells her.

"It's the skipper," I inform everyone in the room.

"Where are you about this time every day, sir?" Tony asks.

"I don't see what that has to do," the skipper starts but like before he is cut off.

"Just answer the question, sir," Tony and I tell him.

"Here every day I send a," the skipper said but is cut off.

"We've got to go now," Kate yells while turning around to run out of the room.

We all run out of the room and head down the passageway while the sun drops for the sky.

"Go! Go! Go! Go!" Gibbs yells at us while running in the back of the line.

We slam the door shut behind us and hit the floor as the room exposed right as the sun has finished
"Are you all right?" Tony asks Kate while placing his hand on her leg to make sure she is ok, and she answers by nodding her head.

"Are you okay," Gibbs asks the skipper.

"Yes," the skipper answers.

"Are you alright too?" Gibbs asks me while looking me over to see a cut on my head I got when I fell onto the floor and the skipper landed on me.

We all return to the room and sit around, all of us is so surprised how the day has ended while the explosion. Kate has cleaned up my head and put a banded on the cut. Kate lays down on the only bed in the room while Tony moves over and lays on the floor on the blow up bed that one of the enlisted brought in for us but they only brought in one. I move from the chair I am sitting on to the floor and laydown on the hard floor and fall asleep in only moment.

When everyone has fallen asleep Gibbs lifts me off the floor and onto the couch and then climbed in beside me and when to sleep himself.

The next morning I wake up at 0500 with my head on Gibbs chest while he is sleeping soundly next to me but he wakes up the second I get off the couch too get ready for the day.

"Morning," I say to him while walking over to my bag to get some clean cloth for the day.

"Morning, what time is it?" he asks while looking at Tony and Kate.

"0500 or so. What time do we head back to the office?"

"1000," after he answers there is no more talking until Kate and Zoe wake up.

For the rest of the morning we all pack up the gear we have used to help solve the case.

"All right?" Gibbs asks Kate when she look confused for some reason.

"I still can't get over how the line between reality and fantasy were so blurred for Seaman MacDonald," Kate said while putting the computer into the case for it.

"For him, destroying Zugers website was every bit as real and violent as trying to kill the skipper."

"I'm so glad my parents pushed me into sports in high school. Aren't you interested in what I brought you back from Puerto Rico?" Tony cut in from the doorway.

"Sure," Kate said with a putout voice like he has a gun to her head.

"All right," Gibbs said at the exact moment as Kate.

"No," I say without looking up from my packing.
Tony hands Kate a paper bag with his gift in it.

"You've got to be kidding me," Kate said while looking inside it without showing it to anyone else.

"It's a bikini. Two piece," Tony tells her.

"A bottom. And a hat?" Kate said while pulling it out of the bag.

"Puerto Rican."

"Any chance you're going to try that on?" Gibbs asks her.

"You first," Kate said while thronging it out him.

"Trust me, it's not going to fit."

"Pigs. I work with pigs."

"Oi leave Tony alone. He is mostly normal," I cut in while Tony hands Gibbs a gift that is wrapped up in brown paper.

Gibbs opens the present and finds it is a book on computers.


"It's in Spanish," Gibbs says.

"There's just no pleasing up, is there?" Tony says while handing me another brown bag with my gift in it.

"Thanks," I say before opening it, I look in it only to bust out laughing.

"What's so funny?" Kate questions me.

"It just that I already have one of those," I inform her.

"You already have one?" Tony asks and then adds on, "can I see you in this or the old on?"

"What is it?" Kate asks me.

"A hate," I said while pulling it out, "and a pair of shoes," which I pulled it out.

"That's it?"

"Yes."

We leave the room and Tony takes a second to grab Kate's gift and put it in his pocket.
I am sitting at Gibbs desk waiting for a case to come in or for the day to be over because I have nothing to do for the day because I have already finished everything I have to do for the day. Tony and Kate are working on their paperwork from other cases.

"Grab you gear," Gibbs said while walking through the squad room towards the plasma screen.

"My three favourite words," Tony said while walking over to the screen too, with Kate and me following him.

"Where to?" Kate asks.

"Saint Mary's River State Park. Right here," Gibbs said while pointing it out on the map on the plasma screen.

"Maryland," Tony said.

"Good guess. Think you can guess how to drive there?" Gibbs asks while he bends over to grab his go bag and gun.

"I'd say the fastest way would be to take the Beltway to highway two thirty five south. Take that to route fifty and then," at this Tony stops to look around and seeing that everyone else was in the elevator, "punch it into the Nav system when we get lost," he yells while grabbing his bag and getting in the elevator with him.

"What's in the park?" I asks from beside Gibbs while to stands next to Kate behind me and Gibbs.

"A deer hunter stumbled onto an aircraft drop tank – Navy markings," Gibbs informs us.

"We're driving to Maryland to look at a drop tank?" Tony asks.

"It's hot a body in it."

"Now that's different."

"Yeah, I thought so," Gibbs said with his eyebrows raised before turning to talk to Kate, "You pick up Ducky. Tony, you gas the tank."

"You know, Gibbs, most agencies have people who do that sort of thing."
"Mm-hmm. So do we," Gibbs said with his eyebrows raised again.

We all get out to the truck and Gibbs gets into the driver seat. I climb into the middle with Kate next to me leaving Tony to sit in the back with a grumble about us girls getting what we want until Gibbs takes off very fast making him hit his head on the shelf next to him.

The drive takes a while so I turn to Kate and start to mess with her hair and just be annoying her to no end to see if I can make her crack before we get the crime sense.

"Stop that," Kate yells out me after a few minutes.

"Stop what?" I ask while poking her in the ribs for the third or fourth time.

"Stop poking me."

"That's not what you said last night. What was his name again, Bob? Ben? Something beginning with b," I say making to burst out laughing while Kate turns red, "and yes I heard you and who now you had a daddy kink. And that you like getting spanked," I tap onto the end.

"Girls enough, Alice leave your sister alone," Gibbs cuts in with a tone that a parent uses on a disobedient child.

"Sorry boss," we said together, Tony burst out laughing at this but by how red his face is he has been holding it back for a while.

The rest of the trip is quite beside a slapping sound every time Kate hits me for poking her when there is less of a changes of Gibbs seeing but if I ever looked over I would have seen him smirking at me.

We all get out of the truck with our gear and duck under the yellow tape to work the crime scene.

"Bow hunter was tracking a deer. Stumbled across the drop tank," trooper Lynch informs us when we are all standing around the tank.

"He the one who opened the hatch?" Gibbs asks him.

"That's right."

Ducky arrives and looks at the body in the tank to talk about it.

"Mm," Ducky said while looking at the body.

"How did he get so," Kate said while pointing out the mummified body in the tank.

"I believe mummified is the adjective you were searching for. Ah, the tank must have been airtight creating a hermetic environment."

"No air, no bug, no critters," Tony adds on the end.

"And more important, no bacteria."

"You got an estimated time of death, Duck?" Gibbs cut in before someone else can say anything while having a drink from his coffee.
"Very amusing, Jethro."

"I thought it was a missile or a bomb of some kind until I trapped it. It sounded hollow so I cleared some leaves away and found the hatch," the hunter tells us from where he is standing over near the yellow tap.

"Curiosity got the best of you?" I asks from beside Tony.

"Wouldn't yours?"

"Yeah," Gibbs and I say at the same time with a small smile, Gibbs continues to say, "You know what, and it probably would have. Did you remove the flight bag?"

"Yeah."

"Touch anything else?" I ask him.

"Not after I saw King Tut."

"Well, we'll need your print," Gibbs starts before stopping her a second, "to separate them from any other we find on the tank."

"Lieutenant Commander Farnworth. Think he's our mummy?" Kate asks while reading the name of the flight back that was in with the mummy.

"I don't know. Bag it," Gibbs says.

"I can't do anything with this gentleman until we cut him out of here," Ducky says.

"I know what this is, boss," Tony suddenly says.

"Uh… external fuel tank?" Gibbs asks him.

"A three hundred and seventy gallon external fuel tank off an F-Fourteen Tomcat. A few were converted into camera or cargo pods. This one's a cargo pod."

"I'm impressed," Kate said.

"I didn't become an NCIS agent yesterday, Kate. As a matter of fact, tomorrow is," Tony said but Gibbs cuts him off.

"It'll have been two years," Gibbs said.

"Oh, Gibbs why do you remember the day you got drunk at work?" I asks while moving over to the body.

"That's kind of touching, Gibbs, remembering the day you hired me," Tony said at the same time as me.

"Yeah, well it seemed like a good idea at the time. Duck is it okay if I touch?" Gibbs asks Ducky after telling Tony but not answering me like normal.

"By all means," Ducky tells Gibbs.

"Our sailor is a Lieutenant. The flight bag's not his," Gibbs said while using his pen to move the collar to see the medals on it to state his rank.
"Can you see hid dog tags?" I asks Gibbs while trying to see past him.

"Nope. Get a flatbed. We're going to take our Lieutenant and his pod back home with us," Gibbs answered me and then turned to Kate to speak to her.

"Let me guess, you're going to suggest I ride back in the flatbed with the driver," Kate said.

"It wasn't a suggestion," Gibbs tells her.

Gibbs, Tony and I walk to the truck and get in with me in the middle again.

We get back to the office and head to the desk and ait for Kate to get back for us to do more.

Once she has returned we all head down to the garage it have a look at the tank.

"Abby, find any prints on there, beside the hunter's?" Gibbs asks Abby from the other side of the tank.

"I pulled some partials off the inside of the hatch that weren't his," Abby informs us in her hippo way.

"The victim's?" Tony asks.

"I doubt it. Mummies aren't generally the self-help type."

"Run the prints through the military data base," Gibbs said.

"Got it. And there's a serial number on the underside of the tank. The paint's kind of worn off, but I can bring it up," Abby said while jumping around.

"Good. If that tank came off a tomcat, somebody filed a T-F-O-A report."

"T-F-O-A?" Kate asks in confusion.

"Things falling off aircraft," Tony and I answer at the same time.

"You're kidding," Kate said with a raised eyebrow.

"No, that's what they're called. Squadrons kept files on those going to back to biplanes," Gibbs informs her.

"All right," Abby said while moving away from the tank.

"Okay," Gibbs said while walking to one end and Tony to the other end of the tank and grab onto the top half of the tank and Gibbs said, "on three. One, two, and three," the second Gibbs said three the two of them lifted the two half's apart.

"Oh. Sailor on a half shell," Abby and I yell when we see the full mummy for the first time since the case starts.

"Oh, Abby, Alice, please," Ducky said while walking into the garage.

"Sorry," Abby said while I give him an apologetic smile.

"It's not unlike the Egyptians, however. Their mummified dead were buried along with personal
treasures to accompany them on their journey to the afterlife," Ducky said while looking at the body in the half tank.

"Where he could squeeze in eighteen now and then," Tony says.

"He's not wearing shoes," Kate points out.

"I kick mine off when I fly."

"We've got an I.D," Gibbs said while looking into the pod.

"Lieutenant Mark Schilz," Abby reads.

"He's not our golfer. This bag belongs to Lieutenant Lynch," I read off the golf bag.

"Gold wedding band. Looks like Lieutenant Schilz left someone behind," Ducky informs us while looking over the body.

"Okay, I've got a name. I've got a serial number. T-F-O-A will find the plane and squadron," Gibbs said while writing in his notebook.

"And we'll crack the secret of the mummy's curse in no time," Abby said and I then high fived her.

"You took the words right out of my mouth," I inform Abby.

"Abby," Ducky yelled at the same time as I speak.

"What?" Abby asks.

After that we head back to the squad room so that Gibbs can hand out the jobs to be done for this part of the case.

Tony head over to find the T-F-O-A and Kate looks up the victim's record to see if she can find his family and I spend the time looking up different military wording so that at any time I might need it.

"Lieutenant Schilz's service record. He was reported missing at sea off the Eisenhower," Kate informs Gibbs while reading it off her notebook and I hand him the file on the victim that Kate found.

"Amend it. He's no longer missing," Gibbs said while handing the file back to Kate after flicking through it.

"The carrier was a day out of Norfolk at the end of a six month deployment in the Med," I tell him while reading it off the notebook I stole from Kate while she heads over to her computer to amend the file.

"When?"

"Uh, March four, nineteen ninety four. He was declared a deserter thirty days later and he received a dishonourable discharge," Kate informed him once she had the notebook back.

"Dishonourable?"

"Lieutenant Schilz was charged in absentia with theft of government property."
"Ah… the cargo pod?"

"One point two million dollars out of the Eisenhower's safe. He was their Disbursing Officer," Kate said as Tony steps off the elevator and start walking over to the bullpen to tells us what he has found.

"I just spent three reverting hours sorting through squadron records at the safety centre. Found the aircraft that dropped the pod. An F-Fourteen tomcat," Tony informs us as he drops his bag at his desk and move closer to Gibbs while reading the main points from his notebook.

"From a squadron on the Eisenhower?" Gibbs asks him while leaning back in his chair and crossing his arms while smirking at Tony.

"Yeah. Vila-F Two twelve. The Red Wolves."

"Coming home from a deployment?" Kate asks him next.

"After six months in the Med. Want to give me the name of the Tomcat crew?"

"Well, it's safe to assume one of them wasn't Lieutenant Schilz," Gibbs say.

"Why ride in a pod if you've got a seat in the cockpit?" I ask everyone but I don't expect an answer.

"The pilot was Lieutenant Commander Farnsworth," Tony informs us.

"Good news, Commander. It took ten years but we located your bags," I said while moving over to Kate chair and sit down in it.

"The golf clubs belonged to his RIO, Lieutenant Lynch."

"RIO?" Kate asks while taping her notebook on her hand.

"Radar Intercept Officer. Also called a GIBs. One B. sort for 'guy in back.'"

"Why do you have two B's?" I ask while looking over at Gibbs like it was the answer to eternal life.

"Second one's for Basted. What else, Tony?" Gibbs answers me before turning back to Tony.

"V-F two Twelve flew off the Eisenhower for Pax river the day before she docked at Norfolk," Tony continual to enlighten us.

"She? Tony, it's named after Dwight David Eisenhower, for God's sake," Kate tells Tony.

"Maybe she was named for Mamie," I said.

"Her flight path took them over lower Maryland," Gibbs alleged to get us back on track.

"Where the Tomcat lost an external cargo pod. No one on the ground reported being whacked on the head, so the Navy conducted a cursory search and wrote it off," Tony states us.

"This was in the spring of ninety four?" Gibbs asks him.

"Na-ha! Abby estimated how long the pod's been in the ground, right?"

"Nope," I say while popping my p and leaning against the book shelf.

"Ducky calculated the time it took Lieutenant Schilz to mummify?" Tony guested.
"Uh-uh," Gibbs said to him while drinking from his coffee.

"Okay. How do you know the date?"

"I pulled Lieutenant Schilz's service record," Kate informs him from next to her desk.

"Oh. You took the easy way."

"Not so easy. Our mummified Lieutenant went U-A with one point two million," Gibbs informs Tony of what we had to him while leaning back in his chair.

"He was the disbursing officer on the Eisenhower," Kate tells Tony.

"Our mummy's a crook," Tony says.

"Who tried to make his getaway in a cargo pod?" I asks Tony while looking at him like he said the sky is pink.

"I doubt it. Air's cold and thin at thirty thousand feet. He'd know that. Where's the money? It's not in the pod or Abby would be up here screaming lotto," Gibbs enlightens us.

"According to his service record it was never found," Kate tells us while reading it off the file.

"Tony, pull our file on the investigation since you're such an expert at looking up names."

"I wouldn't say I'm an expert," Tony said to him.

"If he's still working for us, I want to talk to the on-board NCIS Special Agent in ninety four."

"What if he's not with us?"

"I want to talk to the on-board NCIS Special Agent in ninety four," Gibbs said.

"On-board NCIS Special Agent in ninety four," Tony overlaps him.

"The mummy had a wedding ring."

"And a wife to go with it," Kate said while moving behind her computer to find it out.

"Got her current address?"

"Not yet."

While Kate finds the wife and Tony looks up the investigator in ninety for, Gibbs and I head down to autopsy to see what Ducky has found.

"The deceased was a Caucasian male, twenty to twenty five, approximately five foot seven. The facial bone structure indicates Nordic descent," Ducky tells us.

"Matches Lieutenant Schilz's description. Commissioned before the DNA database was initiated," Gibbs informs Ducky.

"Oh. Well young man, we'll have to match your smile. The Lieutenant was in remarkable condition, given the precipitous fall. The jaw was broken – fractured, post-mortem, no sign of bleeding. The injury is consistent with a nine-iron or possibly a sand wedge. Definitely one of the lofted clubs he flew with."
"Ducky, I'm not interested in what happened to him after he died."

"I'm surprised to hear you say that, Gibbs. You know post mortem details could be extremely revealing. Remember that case four years ago, where the young Marine was buried in an ant hill up to his neck?"

"Duck, eight years ago. How did he die?"

"Oh, it can't be eight years. No, I know it wasn't. Four years ago your third wife hit you over the head with a baseball bat. I distinctly remember the ant-eaten Marine on the table there when I stitched it you up."

"Ducky, how did our young Lieutenant die?"

"Why did your third wife hit out over the head?" I asks Gibbs while following him and Ducky over to the mummy.

"I think the poor fellow bled out. I made a minimal incision in the chest cavity and I come across evidence of massive internal haemorrhaging," Ducking informs us.

"From where, I can't see anything."

"I don't know yet. But something quite small must have punctured the chest cavity. Yes, I'll need to send the poor boy for a cat scan to get proper look."

"It couldn't have happened when he augured in on the pod?" Gibbs asks Ducky.

"No! As I told you, the fracture to the jaw was post-mortem, obviously inflicted by the crash. This amount of bleeding could only occur when he was alive."

"Which means that Lieutenant Schilz was murdered and then stuffed in the pod."

"Yes, yes I suppose it does."

After talking to Ducky, Gibbs leaves to get coffee and I head over to his computer to help Kate find the wife of the victim.

"Gotta be decaf," Kate says when she sees Gibbs returning with his coffee.

"What?" Gibbs asks while stopping in front of her.

"All that coffee you drink."

"Hi-test."

"Don't you twitch?"

"Nope," Gibbs says after putting the cup on the flat of his hand and showing it is not twitching, "How's it coming?"

"Uh… still no address."

"You know, if Lieutenant Schilz stole the money, he didn't do it alone."

"Why do you say that?"
"Someone murdered him and stuffed him in the pod. Maybe an accomplice that didn't want to share the million," I cut in while moving away from the computer so Gibbs can sit down.

"Could he have surprised the thief in the Disbursing office and been murdered?"

"Well no, then someone would have to carry the body from there to the cargo pod without being seen – no easy thing to do on a ship with six thousand souls," Gibbs said to Kate.

"Oh, I found Lieutenant Schilz's widow. She's remarried and lining in Arlington," I informs them while leaning over Gibbs and reading it off his computer.

"How did you find that? I was looking for longer," Kate said to me.

"Helps to know people, a friend owned me a favor and I just cashed it in."

"Go get her," Gibbs cuts in while talking to Kate.

Tony is walking towards us and Kate rushes past him and nearly knocks him over.

"Was it something I said?" Tony inquires of us.

"Not yet," Gibbs tells him.

"Well, it looks like we're going to have to go to Hawaii, boss."

"What going to Puerto Rico is not good enough for you, now you want to go to Hawaii?" I ask him.

"Now it's what you said," Gibbs said at the same time as me.

"NCIS Special Agent Afloat, Richard Owens, investigated the robbery in ninety four. He's currently assigned to NCIS, Pearl Harbor," After Tony said this Gibbs gives him a look that makes him add, "or we could always use video conferencing. You know Owens?"

"Nope," Gibbs tells him.

"I didn't think you would. He's considerably younger than you are."

"What would you consider, considerably?"

"The guy was young, Gibbs. Only twenty eight. That makes him thirty seven now."

"Wow, who know you know how to do math," I say with an innocent look on my face.

"Then considerably would not be an accurate description," Gibbs informs Tony.

"I didn't realize, boss. How old are you?" Tony asks.

"Rude," I mumble.

"It doesn't matter how old I am," Gibbs informs him.

"Well, it does actually because it gives me a reference point for the word that," Tony is going on.

"May I see the file?" Gibbs cuts him off by asking. Gibbs tries to read the file but the print is too small or something because he has to move the light over the file to be able to read it while squinting.

"You know, after forty everybody's eye," Tony starts again.
"The night of the robbery, there was a report of a man overboard. A-Aft watch spotted a fife vest beacon in the carrier wake."

"You're embarrassed to tell me how old you are."

"Not at all," Gibbs inform him before reading, "Schilz's shoes were found in the hold full of scrap life vest."

"Yeah, the Navy presumed that he robbed the Disbursing office, fakes falling overboard and sat tight with the cash until the carrier put into Norfolk."

"They based all this on finding his shoes in the hold?" I ask Tony.

"Well, maybe the Navy read Agent Owens' notes. They are attached to the back of the file."

"Lieutenant Schilz must have eluded the night watch and slipped over the side without his shoes to swim ashore," Gibbs reads off before rubbing his eyes.

"Eye strain," Tony says then rubs the back of his head.

"Brain strain, oh sorry I forgot you don't have one," I say to Tony.

"Ha, ha, know I see why Kate avoids you."

"I know she is jealous of all this," I say while pointing out the jeans I am wearing like it is the most normal thing to think your sister is jealous of.

Tony get the agent onto m-tac and I follow Gibbs into M-tac to talk to him.

"I would have never guessed he flew off the ship," Agent Owens said over the large screen the covers a whole wall.

"I don't think it was his idea," Gibbs informs him.

"I was sure he'd swum ashore with the cash. That damn case has been the only blotch on my record for twelve years."

"Didn't do much for Lieutenant Schilz's record either."

"He stole the money. I'll stand by that."

"Well, if he stole it, Agent Owens, where is it?"

"Beats me but it's not on that ship. We searched every inch of it for him and the cash."

"The Eisenhower docked the next day. How long did you search?"

"I don't remember."

"Two days," Tony informs Gibbs from beside and behind him a little.

"Who searched?" Gibbs asks.

"Hell, the entire crew," Agent Owens informs us.

"Finders keepers? Treasure hunt?"
"What are you implying, Gibbs?"

"Nothing. I'm just wondering how you managed to search every inch on a ninety five thousand ton, twenty four story tall, one thousand forty nine foot long aircraft carrier in two days."

"We couldn't keep the crew any longer than that. They'd been deployed for six months. Their families were waiting dockside."

"Which means you didn't search every inch. So as far as you know, that money could still be on board."

"It could be, but it isn't."

"Another assumption, Special Agent Owens? Or do you know this fact?"

"I don't like the tone of this. You've got my report. I have nothing more to tell you."

"Okay. We'll see. The Eisenhower is currently doing quals in the Atlantic. She'll be back in Norfolk for the weekend liberty. Be there. Of seven hundred. Saturday."

"You cannot order me back to that – that," Agent Owens start telling us but Gibbs gives the agent in the room, the signal to cut of the video feed.

"Where'd you get those statistics?" Tony enquires Gibbs.

"Read 'em," Gibbs enlightens him.

After talking to Agent Owens in M-tac we head down to see Abby see what she has found in the garage.

"You put it back together," Tony says to Abby indicating to the tank which is put back together.

"Yeah, I had to study the fiberglass sarcophagus in one piece," Abby enlightens us.

"What'd you find?" Gibbs query her.

"Something hinky. Okay, the pod is attached to the Tomcat by an M-X-U rack with two hooks."

"It's here and here," Tony said to Gibbs while pointing it out to him but when Gibbs gives him a look with his eyebrows raised so he adds, "Wasn't sure you could see 'em, boss."

"Go on," Gibbs say to Abby while turning to.

"The hooks fit in these holes. Now, when the pilot wants to eject the pod, he flips a switch and the hooks disengage," Abby said while moving around and acting out what she is saying.

"The pod drops away," Tony cuts in.

"Well, actually it's kicked away. The forward and aft ejector fire and kick it off the wing."

"T-F-O-A report said the pilot didn't touch the pod ejector switch. The pod just fell away. Is he lying?"

"No. If he had popped it, the ejectors would have made dents in the pod."

"No. No dents," Gibbs said after shining his touch where the hooks would have been.
"No dents. Just damage from plowing into Mother Earth," Abby informs us.

"You know, when you think about it," Tony said while making sound affects before saying, "if the lieutenant was alive that would have been one hell of a ride," after a moment when everyone is looking at him he adds, "well, it would."

"Tony's weird," Abby signs to Gibbs without knowing I can understand her.

"Oh, just figuring that out now?" Gibbs asks in sign making me burst out laughing which cluses them in on my understanding of them.

"I thought he came with a warning – weird person stay away," I sign from behind Tony.

"You know, it's not polite to talk with your hands," Tony says to Abby and Gibbs.

"Gibbs, come look at these holes," Abby said.

"Yeah, top of the hole's damaged. This one, too," Gibbs said while looking at the place where it connects to the hooks.

"To remove a pod on deck, you insert a key in the M-X-U rack and turn it. That withdraws the hooks. Now, if you turn the key only until the tips of the hooks are holding are holding onto the pod then," Abby said while acting it out again.

"It should tear loose on the cat shot and leave marks like these on the hole."

"Except the mummy's curse was working so the tips held onto the pod until it was over Maryland."

"Abby, there was no mummy ten years ago so how could there be a curse?" Tony asks Abby.

"Tony, it is a chicken, egg thing," I explain to Tony like it is the most normal thing in the world, the door behind me opens and Kate comes rushing over to us.

"I interviewed Lieutenant Schilz's widow. They had a child, Alicia. Nine years old and she's as pretty as her mum," Kate informs us while walking around and coming to a stop in front of Gibbs.

"I know I should have taken that interview," Tony and I say at the same time.

"She's remarried, Tony," Kate said while giving me a dirty look for even thinking about that.

"And?" I asks Kate.

"Yeah," Tony asks me at the same time.

"He does this just to screw with me. Don't you? I now that you do," Kate said.

"Do you have a report to make, Agent Todd?" Gibbs asks.

"Mary got a phone call from her first husband the day he disappeared. She'd just given birth at the Bethesda Naval Hospital – he called her from the carrier."

"So?" Abby enquire.

"So it's a big deal to call home from a ship in ninety four," Gibbs tells her.

"The signal was bounced off a satellite and routed to the Comm office in Norfolk."
"Did you trace the time of the call?"

"Navy doesn't get rid of anything. Comm office records show that a Lieutenant Schilz called Bethesda Naval Hospital from C-V-N Sixty nine, that's the Eisenhower," Kate said before stopping and looking down at her notebook and then saying, "at zero five thirty three on the fourth of March, nineteen ninety four and the call lasted twelve minutes."

"Tony. What time does the shmuck's report say the disbursing office was robbed?"

"What shmuck?"

"Oh ours, who else's is there?" I ask Kate.

"Between twenty one hundred hours, March third when the office was secured and zero seven hundred on the fourth when it was opened by the Assistant Disbursing officer," Tony reads off his notebook before Kate can answer me.

"It doesn't let him off the hook," Kate says suddenly.

"Ensign Wiles," I inform them of who the assistant disbursing officer is.

"Wiles? Randy Wiles?"

"Ah, no. you're not getting me to bite, again. You read this report," Tony said to Kate before adding, "no! Mrs Schilz told you!"

"Actually, she did."

"I knew it."

"Only she didn't tell me that Randy Wiles was the Assistant Disbursing Officer. She said he was her husband!"

The next day Tony and I meet Agent Owens at the Eisenhower's on the deck to wait for them.

"This is why I jumped at being stationed at Pearl. It's only November and I'm freezing. I hate Norfolk," Agent Owens complains.


"Where the hell is he? I didn't fly standby and sit next to a toilet for twelve hours to freeze my ass off waiting."

"First class toilet," Tony asks until he looks at Agent Owens face and feels me poke him in the ribs, "Sorry."

"He's talking to me like I'm some kind of newbie. Who the hell does this Gibbs think he is anyway? Ten years and this case is still haunting me. It's like I'm cured," when Agent Owens says this Tony starts laughing like it is the biggest old joke, "What was funny?"

"Our lab tech things there is a curse," I inform him.

"Our lab tech believes there's a curse. But she's a Goth, you know. The chains and the tats and the piercing. You're so," Tony says at the same time at me but he looks over at Agent Owens and
changes to, "how old do you think Gibbs is?"

"What do you want to date him? Or do you just have a daddy kink and are making sure he is the right age?" I ask him out the same time as Agent Owens turns away from Tony but does a double take on what I said.

"Petty Officer Toner was a hottie," Agent Owens informs Gibbs after he ask about her as we walk into the passageway, "If you know what I mean."

"Oh, yeah," Tony says with a smile.

"You investigate this hottie?" Gibbs asks before it gets off the rails with the look in Tony's eyes.

"It's in my report," Agent Owens says.

"So is the assumption that Lieutenant Schilz left his shoes on board so he could swim ashore," Gibbs yells in Agent Owens face.

"That's not in my report!"

"No it is in your attached notes," Gibbs says to him.

"I didn't think the Navy was going to look at my notes."

"You didn't think about anything but getting off the boat so you can get your rocks off with someone other than the hottie," I tell him before Gibbs steps in front of me to stop me from hitting in him.

"That's not fair," Agent Owens says.

"Life's not far, live with it or get over yourself," I tell him while trying to step around Gibbs to really show him what I think of him now.

"Neither is convicting a man absentia for a sloppy investigation," Gibbs informs him at the same time as me while trying to stay between the two of us.

"Lieutenant Schilz was the only one who could have down it. Wiles was in an all-night poker game and Erin was already in her quarters," Agent Owens informs us.

"How do you know?" Tony questions.

"That cruise was the first time females were deployed at sea. If they weren't at chow or at work, they were in female country. The Navy ran that area like it was sorority. No men allowed."

"I'll bet you all you did was take her word. How many women got pregnant on that cruise, Special Agent Owens?" Gibbs asks.

"Quite a few, Agent," Agent Owens says while Gibbs phone starts ringing.

"I guess the house mothers weren't on top of the log book," Tony says.

"Gibbs," Gibbs answers the phone.

"How many of those babies where yours?" I asks him once Gibbs walks off to talk on the phone.
"None," Agent Owens says.

"Oh, can't get it up, I see," I tell him like I am talking to a baby who can't sit up.

"The pilot and his RIO are dead. I don't want to hear the word 'curse' out of your mouth, DiNozzo," Gibbs informs us.

"Would I say that, boss?" Tony asks Gibbs.

"The curse of the mummy strikes again," I say before adding with a smile, "You said DiNozzo can't say anything but I am not DiNozzo."

"You said it to me," Agent Owens informs Tony while everyone gives me a look.

"You said it first," Tony said while we follow Gibbs thought the passageway.

We get to the disbursing office and start talking to a man by the name of Fallini.

"The robbery is a legend on this ship. Knowing Lieutenant Schilz didn't get off with the cash is going to start a treasure hunt. Excuse me," Fallini says.

"What? And in the last ten years it just have failed to be found?" I ask him like he is insane foe believing it is still on the ship.

"Bring back fond memories?" Gibbs asks Agent Owens.

"Not so fond," Agent Owens informs us.

"Was something going on between you and Petty Officer Toner, Agent Owens?"

"No."

"Gibbs, he can't have a relationship with her because he can't get it up," I inform Gibbs.

"You called her a hottie," Tony reminds Agent Owens.

"You keep referring to her by her first name," Gibbs informs him without responding to me.

"We're not allowed to fraternize with enlisted females. You know that," Agent Owens informs Gibbs.

"And women don't like soft cocks," I tap onto the end for him.

"You're not allowed to put assumptions in reports either," Gibbs informs him before turning around to me and whispering in my ear, "And you must behave or you will be on paper work duty and not be allowed to help on the case."

"You've made your point, Agent Gibbs. I blew that. But I wasn't screwing around with Erin. She had something going on with one of the airmen," Agent Owens inform us once Gibbs moves away from me.

"That wasn't in your report."

"It didn't seem pertinent."

"Name?"
"Martinez. Martinez. Petty Officer Ted Martinez."

"Hi. Excuse me," Tony said to someone on a computer before taking their place in front of it and looking up the name.

"You think he's involved?"

"I don't know. But since it was his hottie working here, you should have looked into him," Gibbs informs him.

"You're right, Sir."

"Do not 'Sir' me. I work for a living," Gibbs informs Agent Owens while pulling out his ring phone to answer it, "Gibbs."


"A lot of sailors left that year," I state while reading over Tony's shoulder.

"Aviation Machinists' Mate. That means he was working the flight deck," Gibbs says while turning around and looking at Agent Owens.

"Petty officer second. Probably a plane captain," Agent Owens informs us but after a beat of silent where everyone stars at him, "What?"

"Who would have had the ability to stuff a body into a cargo pod?"

"Anyone on the hanger deck."

"Who's most likely?" I asks him.

"You're asking me to make an assumption, Miss Todd."

"She's not asking you to write it down," Gibbs informs him.

"The pilot. The RIO. The plane Captain," Agent Owens informs us when the computer beeps.

"Don't strain your eyes, boss," Tony said while Gibbs and I lean over him to read what is on the computer. Gibbs hit the back of Tony's head for that comment.

"That's no coincidence, Gibbs and I say.

"Don't tell me," Agent Owens says.

"Petty officer Martinez was the plane captain on the Tomcat that dropped the pod that had Lieutenant Schilz's body in it," Gibbs informs everyone.

"Whoa, I should have been playing Beethoven," Abby says while Gibbs and I walk into her office in the back of the lab and see her in a pair of orange glasses while looking at the shirt.

"It's not Beethoven," Gibbs asks while holding up a pair of orange glasses in front of his face.

"No, it's the 'newly dead,' Gibbs," I state while I pick up a pair of glasses to look at the shirt too.
"What's the orange stuff?" Gibbs questions Abby while smiling when Abby and I high-five for knowing the band.

"I don't know yet, but it's only off this part of the mummy's shirt," Abby informs to two of us.

"The same area as Ducky found the hairline fracture," I state while looking over Abby's shoulder.

"You went to see Ducky before you came to see me," Abby exclaims while pointing at Gibbs.

"Is there a priority here I don't know about?" Gibbs asks.

"A girl likes to be thought of first."

"What is with everyone?" I asks as we walk out to the lab so Abby can look at the fibre.

"What do you mean," Abby asks but I just smile and move over to the computer.

"What is the Fibre look like?" I ask while I am almost jumping around while I am waiting for Abby to put it up on the computer.

"I don't know if it's synthetic or natural, but it's definitely a fibre. What's orange in the Navy?"

"Lifejackets," Gibbs informs her.

"Mail bags," I inform her at the same time.

"Weren't the mummy's shoes found in a hold with old life jackets?" Abby asks Gibbs.

"I never believed he was in there with them," Gibbs tells her.

"You might have to change your opinion."

"Did you match Petty Officer Martinez' partial prints on the pod?"

"Yep. No big surprise, he was the plane captain."

"We were hoping that they won't match," I convey to her.

"One of them didn't. I scanned the ridges and cleaned the garbage out. I got six Galton details. I like ten to twelve, but six is enough if you get lucky," Abby informs us while walking back into her office and sitting down in front of her computer and watching the fingerprint friction across it.

"Doesn't look like we got lucky," Gibbs says while leaning over Abby and mine shoulders to watch the progress.

"Well, I limited it to naval personnel who served between Ninety and Ninety four. Still a lot of ridges and curves."

"I might be able to lower the threshold."

"How?"

"I could give you a name and a serial number."

"Oh, that might help."
"DiNozzo," Gibbs yells as he walks into bullpen after talking to Abby.

"...yeah boss?" Tony yells back to Gibbs after mumbling to Agent Owens.

"What are you still doing here?" I ask Agent Owens.

"Uh... well my flights not till nine in the morning. Since I'm here, I thought that maybe," Agent Owens stutters out to us.

"You know how to do a database search?" Gibbs asks him.

"Yeah, yeah, I do."

"Use that computer. Locate Martinez," Gibbs says while pointing to the desk across from his and next to Tony's.

"I'm looking for Martinez, boss," Tony informs him.

"Yeah? I'm getting coffee," Gibbs says to Tony with raised eyebrows' and them walks over to the lift.

"You got computers at pearl?"

"Yeah, but ours is on the beach so we can surf on breaks," Agent Owens enlighten Tony.

"Breaks," Tony says with a laugh while elbowing a bit of rubbish on his desk.

After that I head home for the night because there is nothing I can do at the moment until we find Martinez.

The next morning I get up and head to school for the day.

"Hey Ace, give me your homework to copy," May, one of the popular girls, comes up and tells me like she owns the world and my homework.

"Not going to happen," I tell her without stopping.

"It was not a question, you give it to me or I take it."

"You and what army? And my name is Alice not Ace," I tell her as I turn into the class room and hand the teacher my homework making her give me a look for not letting her copy it.

"I will get you bitch," she hisses at me while trying to get away from the teacher.

"Yea and break your nails. I will like to see that."

After I finish all my classes at school I walk to the coffee shop and buy coffee for Gibbs before walking to NCIS office to see what Tony and Agent Owens has found.

I meet Kate at the elevator and head up to the bullpen together. When we walk into the bullpen, we see that Tony and Gibbs is sleeping while Agent Owens is still working on the computer, he was on when I left.
"Didn't you have a flight to catch, agent Owens?" Kate asks Agent Owens, while putting her coffee onto her desk.

"Hey. Um," Agent Owens said while checking his watch before continuing, "you know, it's a little after two and my flight's not until um... there'll be another flight."

"Coffee," Gibbs says as he walks up.

"Uh-huh," Kate says while taking the lid off her coffee while I put Gibbs coffee on Kate's desk to read what Tony has found while he sleeps.

"Alright, what do you got?" Gibbs asks while drinking all of Kate's coffee.

"We got Petty Officer Martinez was a Mexican national when he joined the Navy. He was discharged at Norfolk on June second, nineteen ninety four where he has his mail forwarded to the," Agent Owens reads off his computer, "Plaza Hotel."

"The Plaza Hotel in New York where he was from June fifth 'till the twenty second when he flew to," Tony cut him off while reading from his computer once he wakes up.

"Manzanillo Mexico. He registered at Les Brisas with a wife, no first name. Just Mister and Missus Martinez."

"They stayed at Las Brisas until the ninth of July. After that they uh... he uh... I lost him."

"Yeah, and I found him in Guadalajara at the Presidents Intercontinental. Stayed there for ten days and then... then I lost him too," Agent Owens said making Tony laugh at him.

"Okay, find out where he was born. Check with the local police there. A guy usually goes home when he's separated. I'm going," Gibbs said while moving away from Kate's desk after putting down the coffee cup.

"For coffee?" Kate asks him while throwing away the empty cup.

"To the head."

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After Gibbs comes back from the head he grabs the caf-pow and I follow him to the lift to find out what Abby has found.

"Still no match?" Gibbs asks while the door opens for us to walk into her office.

"Nothing good enough to take to court. But if my life depended on it, I'd say it was her right middle finger that made that. Thanks," Abby says while Gibbs walks over and hands her the caf-pow.

"Yeah," Gibbs says while leaning over her to see.

"Oh, I spectroed the fibre. Its cotton canvas dyed orange number seven, but it's not from a life preserver. They're made out of urethane coated nylon."

"It's a mailbag, Abby!"

"Orange mailbag, cool!"

"Abby, didn't I already say that?" I ask Abby from the door I am standing just inside of it.
Yeah you did,” Abby said while I walk to the elevator to find it is still there.

We ride in the elevator without talking but it is a confinable silence. Once we get to the bullpen Gibbs sits down at his desk and starts trying workout who has killed the victim.

“Right, I understand. Are you sure?” Kate says into the phone she is talking into.

"Ohio lottery?” Gibbs as her.

"Erin Toner was telling the truth. August ten ninety four she hit a pick six. Bought the ticket at a seven eleven outside of Canton, Ohio. She hit for thirty seven thousand. She lied. She and Martinez stole that money, not Lieutenant Schilz.'

"Kate, incriminating her doesn't exonerate Schilz. She could have played him," Tony informs her.

"No. They force him to open the safe. They murdered him and they stuffed him in a pod."

"Unless Martinez or Toner admits Schilz had nothing to do with the robbery, there's no way to exonerate him."

"I'll get them to confess."

"How are you going to do that?” Gibbs questions her.

"I don't know,” Kate says, before adding, "yet."

"I don't think that is going to happen," I say while looking at what is on Agent Owens screen.

"Whoa! Martinez was murdered in Piedra Negras motel," Agent Owens said once I point at his screen.

"My god! She's a black widow," Kate exclaim.

"I don't think she was ever married," Tony informs her.

"Would you marry her?” I ask him with raised eyebrows.

"We got her. Kate, go back to Pennsylvania and bring Erin Toner in,” Gibbs orders her while leaning back in his chair.

"How? I can't arrest her, can I?” Kate asks her.

"No. No. She has to come voluntarily."

"Show her you tits and if that don't work tell her Tony want to marry her," I tell her while walking over to Gibbs desk.

Lieutenant Schilz finished a call to his wife and newborn daughter at zero five forty five,” Tony explains what is happening on the plasma with the poorly defined cartoon.

"I threw that little heel click to show he was really happy,” Abby informs us with a little giggle.

"Yeah, well not for long. Petty Officer Martinez surprised him with a knife, ransacked the safe and forced Lieutenant Schilz to carry the money to a Tomcat where he murdered Lieutenant Schilz,
stuffed him in a pod and left with the money."

"So what do you think?" Kate asks Erin Toner.

"I thing you could use some help from Disney," Erin informs us like she had not just watched a recreation of a murdered of a co-worker and comrade.

"Oh hey, come on! I wasn't finished with it yet," Abby exclaim in an insulted tone of voice.

"We want to make sure we had the right scenario first," Gibbs informs her.

"That one works for me," Erin states.

"Not for me," Gibbs and I stated at the same time.

"No, lieutenant Schilz would know that Martinez was going to kill him. He'd have resisted someplace," I continual to say without even blinking about saying the same thing as Gibbs, while everyone gave us a look for doing it.

"Especially in a passageway full of sailors. Martinez had to kill him at Disbursing, but how did he move him to the pod if he was dead?" Gibbs takes over when I stop to look for the right way to say what I was thinking.

"He couldn't," Erin states.

"Ah, but he could, my dear. You see, I found hairline fractures on Lieutenant Schilz's pelvis and lumbar vertebrae which Abby here matched to orange can," Ducky informs her.

"Orange canvas fibres from Lieutenant Schilz's uniform," Abby overlaps him before starting to bounce on the spot.

"I saw an orange mail bag being dragged over knee0knockers when I visited the ship," Gibbs says.

"Which is rude by the way. What if someone is getting cookies, they will be but crumbs," I said while Gibbs computer beeps beside him.

"Ah, I'll get back to that in a minute. Where was I?" Gibbs says.

"Dragging an orange mail bags over knee knockers, boss," Tony informs Gibbs.

"Ah yeah, that bothered me."

"Me too," I cut in while raising my hand like in school.

"If Martinez did stuff his body in a mail sack, and dragged it across the ship, how come nobody noticed anything was ah," Gibbs says while smirking at what I was doing, and then clicking his fingers at Abby while looking for the right word.

"Hinky?" Abby and I ask him.

"Yeah, hinky."

"And that's when I remembered how you used to turn heads when you walked by," Agent Owens inputs into the conversation.

"I'm out of here," Erin says with a smile while getting up and moving towards the elevator.
"Not till the shows over," Kate tells her while making her sit back down to watch same more.

"Now who would have noticed a sailor dragging a mail bag over knee-knockers with you walking by?" Gibbs asks her.

"How's that animation?" Abby ask with a smile after starting a new cartoon that is better.

"Much better. However, it's not evidence," Erin says after the video is over before getting up and pointing at Kate and saying, "you touch me again and I will have you arrested for assault, and the rest of you for unlawful detainment."

"You're free to go," Gibbs tells her and watch her walking away.

"Gibbs, you said you will get back to the beeping computer," I remind him.

"Oh right, I said I'd get back with that fingerprint. It's yours."

"Oh. Okay, it's mine. Where'd you find it? On Marks uniform? All that proves is that we got it on," Erin tells us.

"We didn't find it on his uniform. We got it from federales. They found it on the pistol that killed Martinez in Piedro Negras two days before you hit the lotto for thirty seven thousand dollars."

"Now we could extradite you. Mexican counts really don't like it when gringos kill one of their own," Tony informs her.

"But we don't want to do the paperwork and," I start but stop when Gibbs opens his mouth to talk.

"I don't know if it was you or Martinez who killed lieutenant Schilz. You tell it any way you want. We'll take it down," Gibbs tells her.

Kate arrested and takes Erin down to lock up, while the rest of us get ready to go home for the night before we had to do all the paperwork. We all step into the elevator with a lot of talking.

"You know, in Hawaii it takes forever to get anything from the federales," Agent Owens informs us once the door is closed and moving down to the ground.

"Same here," Tony tells him.

"No, no, no, guys. Don't tell me that," agent Owens says after a beat of silent as what tony just said sinks in, "that fingerprint match was faked? Okay, you guys are crazy.

"A lot of things where faked Agent Owens," I inform him, "The cookies won't crumble just from being bumped over knee knocker."

Once the elevator reaches the ground level, we all leave the building and head over to our cars, I am walking next to Gibbs and when we reach my and Kate car I give him a quick side hug before getting into the car to go home.
I get up early today and get ready for the day by putting on a pair of flare bottom jeans and a white shirt after my morning shower. Once my hair is dry and tied up, I go into the kitchen and start to cook a batch of cookies to share with the team. While the cookies are out and cooling I head down to the coffee shop down the road and get the coffees. When I get back with the coffee and pack up the cookies, Kate is ready to go to work for the day.

“How long did Burley work here?” Kate asks Abby and Ducky after Gibbs explain that his old employee had called for help on his new case.

“Five years,” Abby answers while bouncing on the spot.

“Five years with Gibbs? Amazing the guy didn’t end up in a straight jacket,” Tony says without knowing that Gibbs is standing behind him.

“What was that?” Gibbs asks Tony.

“Oh, nothing, boss. Just praising your communication skills.”

“I really miss Burley. He was cool, you know,” Abby declares.

“Listen, when you see Agent Burley, would one of you mind giving him this?” Ducky asks while holding up a cricket ball for us.

“No problem,” Kate says while taking the ball and tossing it to Tony.

“Cricket ball. Well, he was not only an amazing agent; he was also an incredible athlete. And cricket was one of the few games he wasn’t an expert in.”

“Ah, shame,” Tony states but it is obvious that he is jealous of Burley and he hasn’t even met him yet.

“Yeah, I think he’ll get a kick out of it.”

“Of course he will. He gets a kick out of everything. I love that guy!” Abby exclaims.

“Okay. The COD’s waiting for us,” Gibbs informs us while heading to the elevator and we quickly follow him.

“Why are you here in the middle of the week?” Tony asks me, as he just realises I am not normally her in the middle of the week.

“I have finished my work for the week so I decided to come into work because the school will not let me get too far in front of my year level,” I inform him without looking back from the door.

“Why not?” but I just shrug my shoulder as the door opens and we all walk out and to the car that Gibbs has the keys too.

Gibbs and Tony get into the front of the dark blue, five door small car while Kate and I sit in the back. After the first corner where I ended up pressed against Kate because how fast Gibbs is driving, I turn it into a game to squish Kate against the door at every chance I get on the trip.

“Stop it,” Kate exclaim after the fourth corner and she released I was doing it on purpose and not by accident.

“Stop what?” I ask her.

“Stop leaning on me.”
“I’m not doing it on purpose, Gibbs is driving too fast.”
“Bullshit.”
“It’s true.”
“Girls,” Gibbs yells out making his voice drop into the discipline tone of voice that a father uses on a naughty child.
“Sorry boss,” we say but I make a point of waiting to the next corner to move away from Kate and accidently on purpose, pull her hair a bit.

Just accept the fact that you’re going to get lost,” Tony informs me and Kate while walking toward to the airplane that is on the flight deck of a ship, we are all wearing the hamlet that we have to wear for the landing.

“Why do you assume I’m going to?” Kate asks.
“Because everyone does. A carrier is a big and confusing place first time on board.”
“Duly noted.”
The number are stencilled on the bulkheads. First one tells you the deck level. They’re called bull’s-eyes,” Gibbs adds in to scare us a little bit.

Deck level.”
“The second one the frame number. Third tells you the compartment’s position in relation to the ship’s centreline. The last letter tells you what the space is used for.”
“Crossing from port to starboard or star board to port isn’t as simple as going straight across,” Tony informs us.
“Sometimes you’ve got to go up one deck and down another.”
“Or down one deck and up another.”
“Sometimes two.”
“It’s frustrating.”
“Not to mention confusing. But you’ll get the hang of it.”
“After you get lost a few time.”
“That’s one way to look what and then keep it that way,” I state.
“I never thought of it that way,” Tony says.

“Why does your mind go straight to that?” Kate asks me.
“Well, you could get a long distance boyfriend. But even he would get tired of you after only an hour of reading your ten page letter,” I say while moving in front of her to walk next to Gibbs.

Thirty seconds. Thirty seconds till trap,” Crew chief say in preparation of landing, making everyone cross their arms to prepare for landing.

“You okay” Gibbs ask me and Kate, once we have nodded he continue, “Good. Just so you know, this isn’t like landing in a seven forty seven.”
“I sort of assumed,” Kate tells him.

“Dropping from a hundred and twenty knots to zero in one second can take it out of you. Just try to,” Gibbs try’s to warn us but the plane stops before he could finish it but he finished with, “breathe normally.”

“Whew,” Kate and I breathe out.

We leave the plane and are meet by Burley at the door to the first passageway into the ship.

“Traces of meth in the bloodstream,” Burley answers Gibbs.
“According to the Urinalysis Coordinator, clean as a whistle.”
“Where’s this Petty officer Wilkes now?” Tony asks from behind me.

Still in sick bay. You the one at my desk now?” Burley asks Tony while we go down the stairs.

“Actually no. Abby mentioned it in passing. Just assigned?”
“Two years.”
“Really? Huh.”
“You said he was an arresting gear operator?” Gibbs asks when getting us back onto topic.
“Yes, boss.”
“The same crewmen with him in Rota work the flight desk here?” I asks making Burley give me a strange look for taking over what Gibbs said.
“All of them are on Chief Petty Officer Reyes’ crew.”
“Anyone else suspected of using, Stan?” Gibbs asks next.
“Not so far.”
“Good,” Gibbs and I say at the same time, as we walk into Burley’s office.
“What buddies were with him that night?” Kate asks.
“Petty Officers Niles and Shrewe. They berth on deck five, designator five, fifty-six, two, L,” Burley informs Kate while she writes it all down to help her.
“I’ll be fine,” Kate says when Gibbs gives her a look, and then holds up the cricket ball and adds, “Oh, and this is for you from Ducky.”
“If Wilkes was tweaking, Reyes would have noticed,” Tony says while walking around the room, making it obverse that he is listening to what Gibbs and Burley is saying to each other.
“I didn’t get much out of Reyes in my interview. You’re welcomer to try,” Burley informs Gibbs.
“You’re looking good, Stan,” Gibbs expresses.
“I appreciate you coming, boss.”
“You waiting on something?” Gibbs asks tony.
“Oh no. I’m gone,” Tony says while speed walking out of the room.
“I’d like to see Wilkes in action. Can you get me deck tapes of him during flight ops?”
“Only about a hundred hours,” Burley informs Gibbs.
“Learning about the case that you haven’t got at the moment.”
“What do you mean that I haven’t got?”
“Well if you had a case you wouldn’t have called Gibbs.”
“I needed the bosses help and…”
“No you are a fish out of water and you called for your daddy to bring you more water.”
“Ok, let’s go and talk to Wilkes,” Gibbs cuts in before someone else says anything.
Gibbs and I walk out of Burley’s office and down to the sickbay.
“Can you not make my old employee kill you?” Gibbs asks me will walking down the passageway.
“No promises,” I answer Gibbs.
It is silent until we reach sick bay and Gibbs sits down next to Wilkes while I take notes while leaning on the back of his chair.
“That’s impossible. I don’t use drugs,” Wilkes informs us after Gibbs tell him that he has drugs in his system.
“Your blood test says otherwise,” Gibbs reminds him of what he had already said.
“Then it must be a false positive.”
“Before you joined up, you were an emergency medical tech,” I import into the conversion and remind Gibbs at the same time.
“You tell me how often that usually happens. Maybe it’s just a whim. Or maybe you like hanging out in walk-in freezers in your birthday suit,” Gibbs tells him.
“I don’t know what happened, sir. I was feeling light headed and hot. Really hot,” Wilkes informs us.
“Well your body temperature was a hundred and six. That’s high enough to kill most men, unless their cardiovascular system was being boosted by some sort of synthetic stimulant.”
“Somebody must have slipped something into my drink.”
“Any idea who that someone might have been?”
“No, sir.”
“Any idea who provided the meth?” I ask him.
“No, ma’am.”
“You know what, I’m trying to help you out here, Petty Officer. If you try to float this story at your court martial hearing, they will laugh your ass all the way to Leavenworth. Where did you get it? Shrewe?” Gibbs asks him.
“No.”
“From Niles?”
“I don’t do drugs! And no one else on my crew does either.”
Once we are done in sick bay, we head to the bridge to talk to AR-bring.
“We’re being temporarily rerouted to assist in a search and rescue. A private yacht has gone missing. We are closest to the area so the Coast Guard has requested our help. It’s a shame really. So close to home and these men now have to turn around and go back,” the AR-bring informs us while I take notes and Gibbs talks to him.
“That’s why you’re resuming flight ops,” Gibbs asks.
“If there’s a drug problem, I need it stopped. I need to know who it is and why testing procedures haven’t picked it up.”
“We’ll do the best we can, Skipper.”
“I’m sure you will. Lives depend on it.”
After talking to the AR-bring, another man on the arresting gear operator team has shown shines from drugs. We meet up with Kate and Tony at the door and walk into the sick bay all together.
“You don’t know for certain, but I don’t think he’s in any real danger now. I’ve got him pretty heavily sedated,” a corpsman informs him.
“What does it look like?” Gibbs asks him.
“I really won’t know until the tox report comes back.”
“I appreciate that, doc, but I don’t have time to wait for a tox report. In your considerable experience, what’s your best guess?”
“It looks like the same situation we have with Petty Officer Wilkes.”
“Methamphetamines?” Kate asks.
“Most likely.”
“Chronic, long term use?” I ask next.
“With his symptoms, it would have to be.”
“Yet his last random piss test was negative, just like Petty Officer Wilkes,” Tony asks.
“Well, it doesn’t make much sense.”
“No, it doesn’t. When can I talk with him?” Gibbs asks.
“Well, that’s hard for me to say, Agent Gibbs.”
“Well, let me make it easier for you, Doc. Fifteen hundred. Consciousness will make the interview go much smoother,” Gibbs says and then we all walk out of the room and Gibbs says to Kate and Tony, “Toss Shrewe’s rack.”
“Got it,” Tony informs us when we get into the hanger bay.
“Go over everything, and I mean everything. Above his mattress, below his mattress, inside his mattress. If there’s such a thing as a fourth mattress dimension, go over that, too. Find out where the Urinalysis Coordinator likes to let it all hang out.”
“Okay,” Kate says.
“I want to find out about this testing procedure. How it all works. See if there’s any way that anyone can beat it. You two and me, we’re gonna have a flight deck film festival. See if you can arrange some place we can match those tapes.”
“I have one of the ready rooms on hold, boss,” Burley informs us.
“Always anticipating, Stan. Some things never change.”
“Got ants in his pants?” Burley asks while looking at a video of the flight crew.
“Question is, who’s putting them there?” Gibbs ask.
“Rota was our last liberty port after we left the Gulf.”
“This tape was done before they hit Rota,” I inform Burley because it seems he doesn’t now that fact.
“Well, maybe he stocked up at Naples or nice.”
“Is that the best you can do, Stand, after working under me five years?” Gibbs asks Burley.
“Well, at least I don’t taint evidence when I bag and tag.”
“I tripped. One time.”
“As I remember, it was because your eyes were glued to some little…”
“Do you mind if we get back to the tape now?”
“Sure, boss.”
“We have a job to do, remember?”
“I do, boss.”
“Good.”
“Did you really do that?” I whisper into Gibbs ear while standing on a chair to get high enough to do it.
“Shush,” Gibbs says back to me without answering me.

After a while Gibbs and I head to sickbay to talk to the second victim about how he got addicted to meth.
“This is the second time I have had to come down here to talk to a member of your crew,” Gibbs informs Shrewe while sitting in a chair next to his bed and I take notes while leaning on the back of the chair.
“I don’t know what to tell you, Sir,” Shrewe says to us.
“Why don’t you tell me how two members of the same crew who work the same team flip out on meth within a few days of each other?”
“Meth?”
“Yeah. It’s a fine white powder cooked up in a trailer park. Makes people do funny things, like freak out on a flight deck with a plane on final approach.”
“Sir, there’s gotta be a mistake. I’ve never done frugs.”
“Never?”
“Not once in my life, Sir. It’s against my morals. I feel the same way about alcohol and tobacco.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes, Sir. I even reported a guy for smoking some pot on my last cruise.”
“Well, it makes a nice story to cover your own ass in case they catch you with the real deal.”
“I’m telling the truth, Sir.”
Before anyone can say anything more, a heart machine goes into a code of someone’s heart stopping making everyone run to the room including Gibbs and me.
“Code blue! We’ve got a code blue!” Milano yells out while running to the room.
“Crash cart!” the doctor yells to the nurse.
“Coming in!” a corpsman yells out.
“Start the charge.”
“Lead line in.”
“Charge to two hundred joules.”
“Clear.”
“All clear,” the doctor yells out and then they shock the body.
“No response,” Milano informs us after checking the body for life.
“Three hundred joules!”
“Charging,” the corpsman yells.
“All clear,” the doctor yells and shocks the body again.
“Three sixty?” Milano asks while the machine continual to beep.
“Won’t help.”
After watching this Gibbs heads to the flight deck and what for the rest of the team to come up there
“Gentlemen. Keep your eyes peeled. Don’t miss a thing,” someone said over the PA.

“Wilkes was killed, probably because he was going to give up the supplier,” Gibbs informs us once Kate and Tony arrived to where we are.

“Makes sense,” Tony says.

“Yeah, well what makes no sense is that these boys are involved at all. Now Wilkes was a proud Navy legacy, and Shrewe was a Boy Scout,” Kate tells us like it makes a different.

“That’s what they want you to think. Drugs addicts learn the art of the con fast,” Gibbs informs her.

“Well, I had the lab send all the urine samples to Abby for her to see what is happening with them,” I inform everyone.

“Good.”

“When did you do that?” Kate asks me at the same time as Gibbs.

“Where’s Burley?” Tony asks before I can answer the question.

“Watching more flight deck footage,” Gibbs answers him without a care in the world.

“Still?”

“Yeah, he’s been at it almost eighteen hours now,” I inform Tony before add to Kate, “While we were waiting for you and Tony to come up here to see what you had found.”

“He’s always been this way. I’ll see how he’s doing,” Gibbs inform Tony and Kate before turning and walking back into the ship with me following him.

On the way back to Burley, we stop and get food for all of us to eat.

“I brought you a bagel,” Gibbs informs Burley while handing the bagel to him.

“You remembered! Bacon, sausage, eggs, onions, cream cheese and jalapenos,” Burley says while looking at what is on the bagel.

“How do you eat that?” I ask with a very confused look on my face.

“You want to fill me in here?” Gibbs asks while pointing to the video that is playing on the screen that Burley is watching.

“This is interesting,” Burley says while the three of us what the screen to see the Chief Petty Officer Reyes handing them something.

“What is chief petty officer Reyes handing them?”

“It’s hard to tell from this distance.”

“Can you get closer?”

“We’ll have to enhance the tape.”

“Upload the footage to Abby. She would be able to get something,” I inform them as I walk over to computer and doing what I said.

“First find DiNozzo and Kate. Have them check out the Air Boss’s take on Reyes,” Gibbs inform Burley.

“You have a glob on your shirt there,” Gibbs and I say at the same time, making Burley give us a weird look, and Gibbs adds on the end, “Stan.”

After a while we all meet in burley’s offices to call Ducky too how the first victim died.

“Well here is Petty Officer Wilkes with an I.V. drip going into his arm,” Ducky explained to us over the monitor while pointing to Gerald who is laying on the autopsy table and waved at us, “Please, Gerald, this is not dinner theatre. Suppose someone disconnected his I.V. tube at both ends and blew all the liquid out of the tube, leaving nothing but air. Suppose they emptied the saline bag half way,” Ducky says while doing everything he explains to us, “that should be about it. The I.V. tube is attached. This blue balloon taped to Gerald’s arm represents his vein. And the valve is inserted into the bag. Air is blown into the tube using this one way valve. The air is trapped. When I open the flow rate valve, and squeeze, air is pushed down the tube and into the vein and death occurs… oh, within sixty seconds.”

After Ducky says this Gerald simulates death and Ducky says to us, “I do apologize.”

“So that’s what killed Wilkes?” Tony asks him.

“I’m pretty certain.”
“Any way the air could have gotten into the line accidentally?” Kate questions him next.
“Normal air is less than one percent carbon dioxide. The gas bubble in Wilkes’ heart was six percent c-oh-two.”
“That’s not air; that was breath. It was deliberate,” Gerald informs us.
“So Duck, this would have had to have been done by someone with medical knowledge?” Gibbs asks next.
“Most certainly.”
“You’re supposed to be dead,” Ducky said informs Gerald.
“I’ll see what I can find,” Kate says.
“I’ll have Burley meet me in sickbay,” Gibbs says while Kate him and I all walkout of the room.
“I had no reason to kill Petty Officer Wilkes, Sir,” Milano informs us while we talk to him in sickbay, Gibbs is standing in front of him and I am standing behind Gibbs taking notes.
“Not unless you were supplying him methamphetamines and you were afraid he would talk,” Gibbs says to him.
“I wasn’t.”
“Your prints were all over that saline bag.”
“Sir, I was the attending corpsman. My prints are supposed to be on that bag. Petty officer Wilkes was alive when I went to change that bag out. When I came back he was dead. That’s the truth, sir. Give me a polygraph, anything! But that is the truth,”
After talking to Milano, Gibbs and I walk into the sickbay waiting room to see Burley there, making Gibbs slams the door behind us while staring at Burley.
“Where have you been?” Gibbs asks while getting into Burley face.
“You were supposed to meet us here, Stan.”
“I thought this was more important.”
“You don’t get paid to think,” I inform him.
“Why don’t you let me be the judge of what’s more important?” Gibbs says at the same time as me.
“Yes, boss.”
“I mean, that is why you called me, right?”
“Gee, it’s funny how it’s all starting to come back to me now.”
“What’s that?”
“The tightness in my chest, the upset stomach. All the pleasantries that come with working for you.”
“Your breathing not laboured, your fine,” I inform Burley while stepping over a knee knocker.
“What have you got?” Gibbs asks him after me.
“There were a second set of prints on the saline bag,” Burley informs us.
“Wilkes.”
“You know he used to be an EMT.”
“You think he killed himself?”
“One of the doctors bent a few rules, let Wilkes take a call from his father,” I informs Gibbs what I had learnt.
“His very proud… retired Chief Petty Officer father,” Burley finished for me.
After this we get into the room that we are using to watch the videos of flight ops and contacted Abby to see how she is going.
“I was able to bring it way up,” Abby informs us, “Take a look at this.”
“Much better,” Burley says while looking at a enhanced photo of the flight ops.
“Right there! Abby, can you get us in closer?” Gibbs ask her.
“Patience, Gibbs. You can’t rush art,” Abby says while zooming in and we are able to see a pill being passed around.
“Abby, you are talking to Gibbs, he would rush his own frenal,” I say making Abby shot me a smile.
“Smart money says that, that is not a Tic Tac,” after Abby says this Gibbs shuts off the call and leaves the room, leaving Burley and I to follow him.
“Let’s go! Let’s go! Let’s go! Let’s go!” Chief Reyes yells out as we are standing on the jet landing
“Chief Reyes?” Gibbs says but it not really a question he is just making sure it is the right person.
“Yes.”
“We haven’t been introduced. Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. You already know special agent Burley,” Gibbs say without including me while I stand behind him, which is hiding me from Chief Reyes view.
“What can I do for you, sir?”
“You can give me one of those capsules you gave Petty Officer Wilkes during Flight ops.”
“Sir?”
“We have it all on flight deck tape, chief,” Burley informs him.
“You can see a capsule from that camera up there?” Chief Reyes ask while pointing to the camera.
“We had it digitally enhanced. We can see the hairs standing up on the back of your neck,” I inform him making him look at me in distaste.
“What do you think those are, sir, Ma’am?” Chief Reyes ask while pulling out the capsules.
“Meth,” Burley and I say and burley adds onto the end, “Chief.”
“Meth? That’s ninety eight percent caffeine. Available over the counter at any pharmacy in Norfolk. Coffee’s not allowed on the deck so I give it to my men to keep them going. I would never do anything to jeopardize these men, Sir. I love these men,” Chief Reyes say while handing the pills to Gibbs, “and I would die for these men.”

We get back into Burleys office to see Tony and Kate already in the office.
“Standard test pouches. Just like I used in Baltimore,” Burley say while referring to the kit in Tony’s hands.
“Yeah, DiNozzo was a Baltimore cop before coming to us,” Gibbs informs Burley.
“Is that right? How long?”
“Almost Two years;” Tony answers.
“And before that?”
“Philly P.D.”
“Eighteen months, right?” Kate asks him while walking around the room.
“There was extenuating circumstances.”
“And what was before Philly, I forgot. Pittsburgh?”
“Peoria.”
“Right.”
“And it doesn’t matter how long. All that matters now is that I’m here at NCIS.”
“Yeah and again I say it is only because Gibbs was drinking on the job,” I import to the conversion from next to Gibbs.
“Oh, and you’ve been here for um… refresh my memory,” Kates says to Tony.
“Two years. What did you do before NCIS, Burley?” Tony asks to find out more about Burley to see if his life is better or worse than his.
“Ah, just pushing papers around in Washington,” Burley inform Tony with a carefree tone of voice.
“Well, I’m sure it wasn’t so bad.”
“How bad can being a Senator’s Aid be?” Gibbs asks.
“It wasn’t me,” Burley says.
“DiNozzo, the kit,” Gibbs says while walking over to what over his shoulder.
“Yeah. The way it works? Simple. Place a small ample of the suspected substance inside the pouch. Seal it. Break the ampoule inside the pouch which releases the test chemicals. If the clear liquid turns a colour, we have drugs,” Tony explains what he was doing while doing it and we all hold our breath and then tony says, “Not meth.”
“Well, that pouch might be clear, but my guts still in living colour. All right, get a search authorization. Sweep Chief Petty Officer Reyes’ rack. Wait until he’s occupied with Flight ops in the morning,” Gibbs informs us.
“First a Senator’s Aid and now a Secret Service. What’s next,” I asks Gibbs as he sits for on a chair
waiting for the next morning see what we can find. He just grunts at me.

After dinner Burley gets four fold out beds brought into the room for us to sleep on and as we all go to sleep.

Burley, Tony and Kate comes back into Burleys office after searching Chief Reyes room and testes some power they found but it came back negative as well.

“No, it looks the same as the Alert capsule we tested,” Tony says.

“You think we’re barking up the wrong tree?” Kate asks.

“Actually, I was thinking just the opposite. Why have the contents of an Alert capsule loose on your locker shelf?” Gibbs says.

“Unless you emptied it so you can fill it up with something else,” Burley says.

“Then why didn’t we find traces of speed?” Kate asks.

“Because you can be sure Reyes is taking extra precautions with a substance that can put him away,” Tony tells her.

“Okay. Then how do we link Reyes to the meth?”

“By going to the one guy from the original crew who still might be holding some,” Gibbs and I say at the same time, making Burley give us a look again.

Gibbs and I head to the hangar bay to talk to Niles who is working out on a punching bag and almost hits Gibbs when he turns and see us but he stops just before he landed the punch.

“Whoa, a little jumpy today, Petty officer?” Gibbs asks him with a small smile.

“Nah, you know, I just get a little nervous when it gets close to duty time,” Niles informs us while removing the boxing tape on his hands.

“Reyes works you hard on that flight deck,” I says.

“Yes, ma’am. You’ve got to keep on top of it.”

“Sounds exhausting to me.”

“Nothing I can’t handle, ma’am.”

“Especial when you have yourself a little pick me up,” Gibbs takes over the conversation.

“Sir, I don’t know how many times we gotta go over this, but I…”

“This is the last time, I promise. My crew is tossing your rack as we speak,” Gibbs talks overlaps him.

“They’re not going to find anything.”

“Maybe that’s because you have it on you,” I state.

“You want to search me? Go ahead. But I’m telling you the only pick me up I use is a cup of coffee before I go on duty and a couple of these when I’m on deck,” Niles informs us while pulling out the bottle of coffee pills.

“Mind it I hang onto these?” Gibbs asks while taking the bottle of him.

“No, sir!”

After talking to Niles, Gibbs and I head back to Burley’s office to test this pills for meth and the test comes back positive.

“Meth disguised as caffeine capsules,” Burley says in surprise.

“I’m assuming you didn’t find anything in Petty officer Niles’ rack,” Gibbs says.

“Gibbs never assume, it will make an ass of you and me,” I inform Gibbs and Tony begins to laugh after hearing that.

“Clean as a whistle,” Tony says through his laugher.

“They’ve been telling the truth all along. They were getting hooked and they didn’t even know they were using,” Kate informs Gibbs and me because everyone else already know because they are the ones that searched rack.

“How in the hell could a chief feed his own guys speed?” Burley informs us.

“Are we going to bring him in now?” Kate asks Gibbs.

“Not yet. All we have is a Petty Officer in possession who claims his highly regarded superior gave
“Won’t fly with JAG,” Burley informs us.
“Then we have to get the evidence to him without his knowledge,” Gibbs answers her.

Gibbs and I stand in the shadows under the stairs, so close that my back is against Gibbs’ chest, watching Niles and Chief Reye talking in the passage way behind a closed door that leads to the flight deck.

“Why the hell aren’t you on the flight deck, Niles?” Chief Reye asks Niles.
“I don’t know, Chief. I ain’t feeling so hot right now,” Niles responds to him.
“What do you mean you don’t know? We’ve got aircraft coming in!”
“I’m beat, man. I don’t know what’s wrong with me.”
“You’ve got to get it together, Petty Officer. You’ve got to suck it up!”
“I don’t think I can, Chief.”
“Come here. This should help you out,” Chief Reyes said while handing Niles a pill.
“Just one, Chief?”
“Now get the hell on the deck,” Chief Reyes tells Niles after handing him another pill. Instead of taking the pill or going back out to the flight deck, he just look over the chief’s shoulder and look at Gibbs and me. Chief looks over at us to see us stepping out from the shadows and into the light.
“That’s okay, son. You followed orders. That’s what a good sailor does. Go on, now.”
“Thanks,” Gibbs say when Niles hand him the pills and then goes back onto the flight deck.
“These men spent ten months in the Golf, combat conditions. Twelve hours a day, one hundred and ten degrees on the deck.”

Later that day we are all on the flight deck, we are walking out to the flight to go home.
“I have to say it was like déjà VA working with you again, boss,” Gibbs informs Gibbs.
“Good déjà VA or bad?” Gibbs asks him.
“Good,” Burley says without through.
“And Bad,” Gibbs and Burley says.
“You know, boss, in all seriousness, you know how much it means to me that,” Burley says.
“Ah hell, Stan, you’re gonna get all huggy on me?”
“I guess I’m not.”
“I didn’t this so, bye,” Gibbs says while shaking Burley’s hand.
“Bye.”
“See you, Stan. Thanks,” Kate informs Stan while shaking Burley’s hand.
“See you around,” I inform Burley while following Gibbs and Kate to the plane while Tony talks to Burley.
“The CAT launch is like the wire landing, only in reverse. We go from zero to a hundred and forty knots in a second and a half,” Gibbs inform Kate and me from beside me while Kate is sitting next to Tony across the hall.
“It’s kind of like sex without all that work,” Tony informs Kate with a grin.
“Everything is like sex to you, Tony,” Kate inform him.
“Cross your arms, chin to your chest. Lean forward as far as you can,” Gibbs tells us while doing it.
“And breathe normally,” I say making Gibbs smile.
“How are you doing, Kate? Kate? DiNozzo, how’s she doing?” Gibbs asks after casting me a quick glance at me to make sure I am okay.
“She smiling,” Gibbs informs us.
“Well, it’s not like sex, because Kate never smiles after sex,” I inform everyone making Kate cast me a glare while Tony and Gibbs laugh at it until Kate elbows Tony.
I finish at school for the day and meet Kate who is standing in front of an office building while Tony and Gibbs talk to the owner of the office inside.

“What’s going on?” I asks Kate.

“The boys are talking and drinking brandy, while the girls have to stay outside and talk while waiting,” Kate informs me while the door opens and the guys exit them, “What is this, Victorian England? The men with their cigars and brandy, while the ladies sip tea in another room? I’m more qualified for this investigation than Tony. To replace me because I shave my legs and not my face is unconscionable and certainly not in the best of the case.”

“You don’t shave anyway,” I inform Kate.

“Are either of you claustrophobic?” Gibbs asks.

“No,” Kate says.

“Nope,” I also answer at the same time.

“Good!” Gibbs says.

“I’m going?” Kate asks.

“Don’t forget to wax,” Tony says while following Gibbs while Kate and I follow him.

“You know, I think I’m more excited to dive on a nuclear sub than I was flying Air Force One,” I inform Gibbs.

“See if you’re still as excited by time we get there,” Gibbs informs me and Kate when he see just how excited we really are.

“Special Agent Gibbs. Special Agent Todd. Miss Todd. Welcome to the enterprise. Sorry your stay’s so short. Your helo’s standing by,” and air officer informs us.

After we are inform of this we all get onto the helo and head off.

“How do we get from the frigate to the submarine? Swim?” Kate asks Gibbs sarcastically.

“Close,” Gibbs informs us.

After the helo ride, we get into a whale boat.

“I don’t see a submarine,” Kate says. Right after she finishes talking the submarine burst out of the water in front of us.

“You see it now?” Gibbs and I ask at the same time.

After we are on board, the sub dives back down to the deep it was out before.

“Five zero feet and passing,” the cob says as we walk into the control room.

Welcome aboard the Philadelphia. I’m commander Peters. This is my X.O., lieutenant commander Akron,” the skipper enlightens us.

“Sir,” Akron says.

“Special Agent Gibbs. Special Agent Todd. Miss Todd,” Gibbs conveys our names.

“Can I help you with that, Ma’am?” Akron asks Kate while pointing to the bag she is carrying.

“No, I’m good,” Kate answers.

“Why don’t we go to the wardroom? X.O., take the Con,” the skipper says.

“Aye, aye, skipper. COB, I have the con,” the O.X, says.

“I’m quarantined the five men as requested. They said you’d fill me in. fill me in, Special Agent Gibbs,” the skipper states once we are in the wardroom, and the door behind him opens.

“One of those men may not be who he says he is,” Gibbs informs him.

“I find that hard to believe.”

“A body was found at Norfolk. It was made unidentifiable, possibly on purpose. We have good reason to believe that he was a submeriner.”

“Fifteen of your crew are new. Four have been eliminated by dental x-ray. Six can be ruled out
because of ethnic origin or body type,” I inform the skipper.

“So that’s it? Your conclusions are based on suppositions?” the skipper asks us.

“Strong suppositions,” Gibbs informs him.

“I interviewed every one of those men when they boarded and examined their personal files before they ever set foot on this boat.”

“We’d like that same opportunity, skipper.”

“You’ll get your interview, agent Gibbs, but you need to understand this boat’s about to commence an A-S-W exercise.”

“Anti-Submarine warfare. An enemy sub tries to infiltrate the carrier battle group.”

“We’re tasked with intercepting and destroying it… theoretically, anyway.”

“One of our subs plays the enemy?” Kate asks.

“The Augusta. Her skipper and I have a bottle of Stoli riding on who wins. So you can see why I want those five men back at their duty stations, A-SAP.”

“Well, we have a better reason keeping one of those men out of their duty stations, skipper. I’d like the COB for security purposes to keep the men from talking to each other,” Gibbs informs the skipper.

“That’s affirmative,” the skipper says and then leaves the room.

“COB. Chief of the boat,” Gibbs informs Kate and me.

“Thank you,” Kate tells him.

“You’re welcome.”

“Why is it every time we end up on a boat or sub or plane, we are treated like we have Black Death for them?” I ask Gibbs making him smile at me.

There is a knock at the door, letting us known that the first suspect is here.

“Enter,” Gibbs calls out, the petty officer walk in and stands behind the chair across the table from us, “Petty Officer Drew.”

“Yes, sir,” Drew answers.

“Have a seat,” Gibbs says and after he says that the petty officer sits down.

“Would you give us your right thumb print, please?” Kate asks him.

“That would be the other one,” I inform him when he holds out the wrong one.

“Oh. Sorry sir, ma’am. I’m a little nervous,” Drew informs us.

“It says here you’re from Boston,” Gibbs reads from his file that is in front of him.

“South Boston actually, sir.”

“There is a difference?”

“Well, if you’re from Boston there is.”

“You just joined the ship from the,” Gibbs say but leave it open at the end to see if Drew knows the right answer.

“The Topeka, Sir. S-S-N Seven Fifty Four out of San Diego.”

“Did you request sonar?” I ask him.

“Yes, Ma’am. I talked to the recruiter about it. I’ve always been into electronics. I built my own guitar amp when I was a kid.”

“You enlisted when you were nineteen, petty officer Thompson?” Gibbs asks the next suspect.

“Right out of high school, sir,” Thompson answers.

“Nineteen? That’s old to graduate high school,” Kate says.

“I got Mono. I was home my junior year. They put me back. May I ask what this is about?”

“No,” Gibbs and I answer at the same time.

“I need you thumb print, please,” Kate informs him.

“Petty officer Thompson was lying about graduating high school at nineteen,” Gibbs says once Thompson had left the room.

“He paused and looked to his left. Usually means the response is fabricated. If he would looked to
his right, he’s be recalling a memory,” I state.
“A memory,” Gibbs overlaps me.
“You’ve has profile training?” Kate asks Gibbs and me.
“What I have had is about a thousand interviews. After a while you start picking up on things,” Gibbs answers and then they both look at me waiting for my answer.
“I spent a summer at the FBI, BAU team. Rossi, Gideon, and Hotchner gave me a private lecture about all things profiling,” I answer like it is common knowledge about me. “But what I don’t get is why Thompson lie about his age?”
“I don’t know. Why did seaman Riggs lie about being married? Why did Petty Officer Drew lie about a year in college?” Gibbs asks the questions on everyone’s minds.
“Well maybe Riggs is secretly married and Drew never finished a full year,” Kate answers him.
“Everybody has something to lie about… which means we have nothing,” Gibbs informs us.
“The fingerprints we took match those in their service records. If there’s an imposter, it’s not one of the five we interviewed,” Kate says after checking all the prints.
“It has to be,” Gibbs says.
“What if he’s on another boat?”
“This is the only one that makes sense. The killer didn’t just dump the body, he removed identifying features in case it was found. If it were found he knew it’d take between twenty four and forty eight hours for AFDIL to make a DNA match.”
“Whatever he was planning to do, it was going to be in that time frame.”
“In that time frame the Philadelphia was only boat going out. Where’d you get the records?” I asks Kate.
“Personnel office at Norfolk.”
“What if someone altered the service record before we or commander Peters got it?”
“Meaning that the imposter worked in the personnel office.”
“Or has an accomplice,” Gibbs says.
“The COB’s at the end of the passageway trying to keep an eye on us. You’ve got to distract him. You’ve gonna need help working the toilet,” Gibbs informs her.
“Gibbs…”
“Trust me, Kate. On a submarine, it’s a very complicated mechanism.”
“Is that why you’ve been shoving water down my throat for the past hour?”
“I want to check out petty officer Thompson.”
“Yes, I was,” Thompsons says to us.
“Yeah, well you don’t have to drown me. You could just ask.”
“Hydrating’s good for you. Go on, un-hydrate,” Gibbs says making me lough out loud out that.
“I’ve never heard it called that before.”
“Go on!”
In the torpedo room.
“We’re going to need a torque wrench,” Thompson informs another seamen.
“I’ll get it,” the other seamen says while moving off to get it.
“I don’t think you were completely honest with us,” Gibbs informs him.
“Yes, I was,” Thompsons says to us.
“I think you lied about high school. Why would you do that?” I asks him.
“The truth, sir, ma’am?”
“Oh, yeah. That’s always the best,” Gibbs informs him.
“I missed a year of high school ‘cause I was in juvenile detention. My record was expunged but I was afraid if the Navy found out, I’d never see the inside of a sub.”
“Agent Gibbs, miss Todd. You were asked to stay in the wardroom,” COB informs us before turning to Thompsons and says, “You can go back to work, Petty officer.”
“Aye, Aye, COB.”

“Busted,” Gibbs whispers while walking back into the wardroom with the COB.
“I didn’t appreciate that little stunt,” the COB informs us after slamming the door behind us.
“Ah, cut us a little slack, no harm no foul,” Gibbs inform him like we just had two cookies for dessert, instead of one.
“No, Sir. The skipper’s cooperated with you every step of the way.”
“Right, that’s why we are confined to the room like prisoner but the suspects are free to walk around,” I inform him.
“Chief of the Boat knows the crew better than the skipper. Are you bothered by any of the men we questioned?” Gibbs asks.
“You’ve only been out one day, Agent Gibbs. I make it a practice not making snap judgments,” the COB tells us.
“It could be something little. Seemingly inconsequential,” Kate informs him.
“Do you get a strange vibration about any of them?” Gibbs ask COB.
“No, but if I do get any vibrations, it’ll come to you through the skipper,” COB informs us.
“Do people react that way because we’re NCIS or do you just have that effect on them?” Kate asks Gibbs.
“I’d like to think it’s me,” Gibbs apprises her.
“I bet you do,” I mumble.

In the passageway Kate, Gibbs and I are watching everything that is happening.
“What’s happening?” Kate asks.
“Emergency blow,” Gibbs informs us as the warning horns blow.
“Skipper wants you,” the COB informs us while entering the wardroom.
“Hang on a moment,” Gibbs informs us just before the sub leave the depth it is out. Sending everyone to the back wall, Kate lands against the wall and I land against Gibbs.
“Wow,” I says once we are on the top of the water again.
“Yep. That’s what they all tell me,” Gibbs says.
“And here I was thinking Tony was the team slut,” I say while following out Gibbs onto the way to see the skipper.

“Any idea who the hell he is?” the skipper asks when we get into the control room.
“We’re working on it,” Gibbs informs him without answering the question.
“Skipper, we’ve got another EAM coming in, sir,” the X.O. calls out.
“Where is Petty Officer Drew?” the skipper ask.
“He had to visit the head, sir,” the Cob informs him.

After finding Petty Officer Drew’s dead body we call Tony to find out what he has got.
“Hey, we matched the prints you faxed. Former Petty Officer Second, Sean Travis,” Tony informs us over the phone while he is at a house.
“Sonar operator,” Gibbs says.
“That’s right. Spent a couple tours on attack subs before he was dishonourable discharged.”
“Was he hooked up the protesters outside the gate?” Kate asks through the phone because it is a call throw our head unit so that we can all talk and hear.
“FBI’s checking that. But they think he and Joshua Fox were part of some small three or four man
“Did you get Fox and the rest of them?” Gibbs asks.
“Not yet. What’s going on down there?”
“We’re on the surface,” I inform him while Gibbs hangs up, after I finish talking I take my headset off and just look around at the ocean around us.
“Good guess,” Kate says to Tony before hanging up herself.

“Secure from emergency breathing,” the X.O. informs the skipper.
“Engineering’s gone through the air conditioning system. It looks like he never got his canister into it,” the skipper says.
“It’s somewhere on this boat,” Gibbs says.
“We’ll search. But if it’s as small as you say it is, it could be hidden just about anywhere.”
“If the canister remains sealed, it shouldn’t be a problem.”
“We’ll tear the boat apart if we have to when we get to Norfolk, XO, prepare to dive.”
“Aye, aye, sir,” the XO says.
“We’re going back down?” Kate asks.
“And that is not something she say often, no matter the circumstances,” I say making Kate and the skipper give me two different looks of disgust.
“We’re fifteen knots faster submerged than on the surface,” the skipper informs her but still gives me the look until Gibbs steps in front of me.
“I’d leave the air conditioning systems offline as a precaution,” Gibbs informs him without moving from in front of me.
“I fully intend to. It’s going to get hot in here.”
“Ah, we’re used to taking heat.”

“How can you drink coffee when it’s a hundred degrees?” Kate asks Gibbs while looking at the coffee, she and I are down to just the singlet, which we wear under our tops for extra warmth normally.
“It helps me think.”
“What’s bugging you? Besides Kate,” I ask him from my seat near the door to the wardroom.
“Travis not releasing the Sarin.”
“He never had a chance. He was quarantined or on duty until the air conditioning system was shut down,” Kate says while kicking me under the table for saying that.
“What was his backup plan? He would have had one.”
“What makes you so sure?”
“This wack job knew he was going to die as soon as he released the gas. Why commit suicide before he could do it?”
“He knew we were onto him. I mean, like you said, he was a whacko,” after Kate says this there is a knock at the door.
“Yeah. Enter,” Gibbs calls out to the person who is knocking.
“Courtesy of the skipper, sir, ma’am. There’s rocky road, cookies and cream, chocolate, butter pecan, and the captain’s personal favourite, pumpkin,” Mass specialist informs us while pointing to the different ice creams.
“Pumpkin?” Gibbs and I ask.
“Do you think we have enough, Steward?” Kate asks.
“There’s about forty gallons more in the galley. Ma’am. Might as well eat it before it melts,” the mess specialist informs her.
“I don’t get it.”
“Had to make room in the freezer for the body,” Gibbs informs her while grabbing a random one and starts eating it, we follow his example and grab one to eat.
“Nice.”
“It’s the only place to preserve it ma’am. Sop on a sub;” the mass specialist said before leaving the
“What?” I ask after a beat when Gibbs stops eat and slowly removing the spoon from his mouth. “Anyone who’s served on a sub knows that. Travis didn’t commit suicide to give up,” Gibbs says while getting up and running out of the room. “Son of a bitch,” I say while Kate and I follow him down the corridor. “Suicide was his backup plan. Where’s the freezer, COB?” Gibbs asks while running up to the man. “Loading door right here, sir. Right there,” the COB says. “The bastard booby-trapped himself. Once he knew that he couldn’t get in the cooling system, he went to his backup plan before we could arrest him.” “The Sarin gas canister was designed to be triggered by cold. Travis knew that if he died, you’d put him in the freezer,” Kate says. “You mean he swallowed the canister?” the COB asks. “Yeah,” I answer quickly. “If his core temperature gets to the trigger temperature, the gas will be released,” Gibbs informs him. “It already has!” Kate says. “When it leaks out, we’re gonna die!” “I’ll get the skipper to do another emergency b/o,” the COB says. “There’s no time for that. Kate, go fill in the skipper. Come on! There’s one way to get this guy off this boat in a hurry. Go! Move it,” Gibbs yells while he, the COB and I grab the body and run down the passageway. “Gangway! Move! Make a hole! Make a hole,” the COB yells while we move to make it easier to get down the passageway. “Move it! Move! Help, Thompson! We need a tube,” the COB yells when we get into the Torpedo room. “We’ve got torpedoes in two, three and four, sir,” Thompson informs us. “Load this in one.” “Evens is in there doing maintenance!” “Get him out of there!” Gibbs tells him. “Get him out guys! Come on!” “Torpedo room, COB,” the skipper’s voice comes over the pa, “You have permission to fire!” “Ay, aye, sir,” the COB says into the radio. We push the body into the torpedo tube. “Secure the inner door!” the COB yells. “Aye, aye!” Thompsons says, while doing it. “Ready a water shot!” “Aye, aye!” “Open outer door!” “Outer door open!” “Flood Two” “Two flooding!” “Fire number one!” the COB yells and the tube fires the body out into the open ocean. “COB, I don’t have to tell you what the most important thing is now do i?” Gibbs asks. “Get the ice cream back into the freezer,” the COB answers. “Exactly.” “Aww,” I say with a small pout on my face that we don’t get to eat it all.

We all walk back into the squad room after everything, Kate and I are wearing a sub hat. “Welcome back,” Tony says when we walk in to the ball pen. “Hey,” Kate says back. “Nice cap. They make you the boat mascot?” “Nope, she is too skinny in the chest area for that,” I inform Tony. “This is your way of telling me how much you missed me, isn’t it? Kate ask Tony while trying to hit me for that comment again.
“No,” Tony answers Kate.
“What are you doing here, Special Agent McGee?” Gibbs ask McGee while sitting behind his desk and I lean against the draws where he keeps his gun.
“I brought my final report, sir,” come McGee’s lame reason for being there.
“You do not have to Sir me, McGee,” Gibbs says.
“What he can’t come up with a better excuse for fucking Tony in the office,” I whisper to Gibbs, making Gibbs have to his smile at my reason for him to still be there.
“Didn’t they teach you how to use email at MIT?” Tony ask McGee while trying to work out what the hell I said to Gibbs this time.
“You graduated from MIT” Kate asks McGee while looking up from her desk to look at him.
“And Johns Hopkins,” Gibbs adds.
“I didn’t tell him,” Tony informs McGee.
“Dam and I thought he got into NCIS because he fucked someone in the right place,” I say loud enough for everyone to hear me.
“What are you doing here?” Gibbs asks McGee again, while smacking my leg to tell me to stop annoying McGee.
“I’ve uh… got a lunch date with Abby,” he finally tells us.
“Wait, you are not gay? I thought you are gay, you look gay,” I say while leaning over Gibbs to look at him closer while he looks offended.
“I’ve got to see this. I’ll take you to her!” Tony says while laughing at McGee.
“Thanks,” McGee says while giving me a look.
“Thanks,” McGee said while walking away with Tony. As the door to the list closes we can see that Tony is speechless.
“I wonder what he said to make Tony speechless,” Kate says.
“He told him about the tat on his ass,” I informs Kate like she is slow for not knowing.
“Emeralds. It was lodged in his gastrointestinal track causing perforation of the peritoneum, internal bleeding, infection and death,” Ducky enlightens us while we all stand around in the autopsy room looking at the stones from the dead body.

“He swallowed emeralds,” Gibbs says.

“He did indeed.”

“I’m going to take a wild guess here, doc. He smuggled them into the country,” I assumed.

“It’s from where he smuggled them in, Alice, Jethro. Our sailor had just arrived from Guantanamo bay, Cuba, where he was a translator.”

“Petty Officer Second Class Kahlil Sa’id. Naturalized American citizen, born in Egypt. Worked as a translator at Camp Delta. Fluent in Arabic, Uyghur and Pashto. Died in his car on route five twenty two near Fredericksburg. Almost killed a pair of bikers,” Kate reads off her note pad.

“Vroom, vroom bikers or pedal bikers?” Tony asks Kate with a smile.

“I said bikers, Tony. Not cyclists.”

“Bikers is a term that refers to all cyclists.”

“Next of kin?” Gibbs asks from his seat behind his desk, getting it back on track.

“None in the States. No US address either. And apparently he rotated from our Naval Station in Bahrain to Gitmo just five months ago,” I inform them what I found while reading it off of Gibbs computer.

“Where did he get those emeralds?” Gibbs and I asks at the same time.

“Gitmo exchange,” Tony says and when everyone gives him a look he adds, “Sorry.”

“Get your gear. We’re going to Gitmo,” Gibbs said while, he and I start walking over to the elevator.

“Ha. Ha. That’s a good one, boss. He was kidding, right?” Tony said while laughing.

“Hey, Gibbs, Alice. I’ve got a gemmologist coming over to look at the rocks. It’s my mother’s friend’s sister’s son,” Abby informs us.

“DOES HE KNOW HIS STUFF?” Gibbs asks.

“I went out with him like once. Didn’t get very far.”

“What was he boring or was he back in the sack?” I asks Abby.

“Is this all from the car?” Gibbs asks while giving me a look.

“Yeah. It was a rental,” Abby says while giving me a different look that plainly says we will take later.

“Any classified material?”

“Not in the suitcases?”

“Not in the suitcases.”

“He would’ve swapped his hard drive before he left. Check it out,” Gibbs said while looking at the victim’s computer.

“These were in the suitcase. Stamped, no postmark. All the same address,” Abby said while handing me and Gibbs a stack of letters.

“NCIS Special Agent Paula Cassidy,” I read off the back of the letters.

“You know her?” Abby asks Gibbs.

“No. but I will,” Gibbs tells her.

“Okay, smell this,” Abby said while sticking a shirt under Gibbs noise and then me.

“Does this turn you on Abby? Because if it does, that explains why your date with your mother’s friend didn’t work,” I informs him.

“It turned someone on. Box of condoms, half empty. The price tag says they’re from the Gitmo Exchange. Maybe… maybe it was a package deal,” Abby explains while giving me a look and raising both the condoms and the shirt to show us what she is talking about.
“See if you can brand the cologne,” Gibbs informs Abby.
“You want some.”
“Nope, don’t use cologne. Women I date think the smell of sawdust is sexy. That’s why I don’t date very many women,” Gibbs says while leaving the room.
“What is wrong with the smell of sawdust?” I ask Abby while moving towards the door but waiting for the answer.
“Some people like guys that smell like roses,” Abby informs me.

“Oh, sorry,” Tony said while running into the elevator and knocking Gibbs coffee all over his shirt.
“You had better have a good reason for spilling my coffee,” Gibbs says.
“I do. I booked us on the first A-M-C flight to Gitmo tomorrow.”
“Un-book it.”
“Ha, ha! I knew it! I told her you were pulling my leg.”
“Navy’s giving us a priority ride today.”
“You mean it? You do mean it,” Tony says while the door to the elevator opens and we all leave the elevator into the ball pen, “Normally I hate priority rides, but who cares if it’s going…”
“What’s wrong with priority rides?” I ask Tony while cutting him off.
“Come on, Alice. You telling me you like sitting on canvas seats slung between cargo pallets?”
“Yeah, it makes me feel like I’m back in the corps,” Gibbs informs Tony.

“Oh, I love priority rides! Boss this is the best,” Tony said once we get onto the jet and are on the way to Gitmo. Gibbs and I are sitting next to each other, I am sitting next to the window, Tony is sitting across from me and Kate is beside him.
“I miss canvass seats,” Gibbs and I say at the same time.
“Check this out. What do you want?” Tony asks while opening the fridge.
“Get to work,” Gibbs says.

“I already started,” Tony said while opening his computer and reads out, “Guantanamo enjoys a year round tropical climate cooled by the breezes from the Windward Passage. Some of the more popular pastimes include skin diving, sunbathing and horseback riding.”
“I would be the last one to rain on your parade, Fidel, but you’re logged onto an official Navy website. It P.R,” Kate informs Tony after looking at his computer.
“This isn’t. It’s the NCIS file on Special Agent Paul Cassidy. She’s an interrogator at camp Delta. Special Agent Cassidy is not to know that Sa’id is dead,” Gibbs tells us.
“We’re not working with her?” Kate asks.
“What if she is the one who gave him the stones that killed him?” I ask Kate.
“Sa’id was carrying five un-mailed letters of hers. Until we find out how she was involved with him, she’s out of the loop,” Gibbs explained to everyone.
“I can’t believe we’re in a forty million dollar Gulfstream. I mean, it’s got to be C.N.O.’s or SECNAV’s. You know Tiger Woods has one of these. Tom Cruise – all the big movie stars. This is their ride,” Tony says.
“Tony, how the hell do you have a job still at NCIS? Who are you having sex with to keep it?” I ask Tony.
“Tony, Alice,” Gibbs says.
“Yeah, boss?” Tony said while I just nod at him to let him know I am listening.
“Can we get to work?”
“Sure thing. Just check this out,” Tony said with a laugh, “It’s a Gulfstream.”

“So much for the element of surprise,” I say when I see Agent Cassidy waiting for as once we leave the plane.
“Welcome to Gitmo. I’m Special Agent Paula Cassidy,” Cassidy says to us.
“Special Agent Jethro Gibbs. Special Agent Kate Todd. Miss Alice Todd,” Gibbs introduces us.
“Hi,” Kate says to Cassidy.
“Hello,” I express to her.
“How are you?” Cassidy asks us.
“Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo,” Gibbs continues.
“Hey,” Tony says.
“Hello. I heard you all were coming. Nice ride,” Cassidy says when she realises we are not going to tell her anything yet.
“You are so right there.”
“This is yours. There’s a map in it. They put you up in one of the nicest houses on the base,” Cassidy informs us while leading us over to a car and giving Gibbs the keys.
“I appreciate that Special Agent Cassidy,” Gibbs said, while we get into the car, Kate and Tony get into the back while I get into the passenger seat, and Gibbs gets behind the wheel to drive.
“‘So is there something going down that I should know about?’ Cassidy ask while leaning on the driver’s door to talk to us.
“No.”
“It’s just that all my transcripts have been pulled, my interrogations have been cancelled, and then you all arrive on the Navy Gulfstream. How would you connect the dots?”
“I wouldn’t,” Gibbs said while starting the car.
We all walk into the Tract home that we are giving to stay in for the case.
“Our. We’ll set up here. Tomorrow morning we’ll be joined by the senior FBI translator covering transcripts of Sa’id’s translations. The interrogator was Special agent Cassidy,’ Gibbs says.
“Um, Gibbs no one is in the room but us,” I informs Gibbs while looking where Kate and Tony ran off too.
While Gibbs talks to Abby on the phone, I head to the living room to help Kate and Tony set it up as an investigation room.
“We finished,” Kate said once we had set everything up.
“But we need to talk to you, boss,” Tony said while looking at Gibbs.
“Whatever. It’ll have to wait ‘til the morning,” Gibbs informs him while walking down the hall to the three bedrooms.
“Well, it’s kind of important,” Kate said to him.
“I appreciate that. I’m going to bed. Talk to you manana,” Gibbs said while walking into the room that Kate and Tony are fighting over and dropping their bags out of the room and slamming the door.
“Any preference on the remaining bedroom?” Tony asks Kate.
“No, both equally crappy. You pick,” Kate tells tony.
“Ladies first,” Tony said, but when she went to walk into the room. Tony ran into the room she was walking into and said, “Night, before slamming that door.
“Where am I to sleep?” I ask loudly enough for all three of them to hear me, once Kate closes the door to the last room.
“Come on,” Gibbs says after opening his door for me to join him in the room.
“Thanks,” I says while I get into the room and close the door behind me. Gibbs and I climb into the bed. The second my head hit the pillow, I fall asleep.
Gibbs and I wake up to the sound of someone shouting in the other room. I move my head off of Gibbs chest and climb off of the bed to find out who the hell shouted at this time of day.
“Halt,” Tony shouts seconds before the door is opened by Gibbs and Kate run in their guns raised to shot.
“I need coffee,” Gibbs says when he realises Tony screamed about an iguanas and not someone in the house.
“Me too,” I say while following Gibbs into the kitchen to make coffee for the both of us.
“William Gamal,” Gibbs said when a car slowly stopped out front of our house.
“We’ve been expecting you. Special Agent Gibbs, Special Agent DiNozzo and Todd, and Alice,” Gibbs introduced us again.
“When the FBI relaxes the dress code, they sure go for it,” Tony says while looking at the clothe Bill’s wearing.
“These are the transcripts of the interrogations of Nasir Al Jazair you requested,” Gamal informs us without commenting on what Tony said.
“The translator was Sa’id?” I asks Gamal.
“That’s right. Apparently there’s a problem?” Gamal notifies us.
“Did you know him?” Gibbs ask him.
“Only to say hello. He worked with the interrogator Paula Cassidy,” Gamal said while we walk into the house, “You might want to think about keeping that door shut. Iguanas have been known to wander inside.”
“We knew. It gave us a rude awakening this morning, I need more sleep,” I say before whispering the last bit, while closing the door.
“Nasir arrived in June from Afghanistan,” Gibbs said.
“Yes. Insists he was picked up by mistake,” Gamal informs us.
“Ha. Weren’t they all?” Tony asks.
“Agent Cassidy did especially well with the subject. Younger detainees feel more comfortable with female interrogators. Once rapport has been established, the prisoner is only interrogated by that team. I understand Agent Cassidy is not in the loop on this?”
“Correct,” Gibbs says.
“I’ll put you in an interrogation room for this afternoon.”
“Well, we better get started.”
“Okay. I want to know more about Agent Cassidy. Who her friends are in Gitmo. How she spends her free time. Where she hangs out. Was she involved with Sa’id,” Gibbs says after Gamal leave the house.
“Sure. No problem.” Kate and Tony say at the same time.
“Did I say both of you?”
“Well, you didn’t not say both of us, Gibbs,” Kate informs Gibbs.
“Yes, she’s kind of got a point there boss,” Tony adds next.
“Yeah, well I’m saying it now. DiNozzo you go. Kate stay here and help me with this,” Gibbs orders.
“Got it.”
“Do you mind telling me why he,” Kate said.
“Yeah,” Gibbs said while cutting it off without telling her.
“Agent Cassidy has a lot of friend, I’ll say that. Mostly male friends and mostly either interrogators or translators,” Tony informs us when he returns.
“Where’s she hang?” Gibbs asks him.
“A club on Base called El Foridita.”
“Check it out. Observe her if she’s there.”
“Can I drink?”
“Sure. Sarsaparilla.”
“Sarsaparilla? Who drinks sarsaparilla?”
“Shane.”
“Who’s Shane?”
“Alan Ladd,” Kate informs him next.
“Who’s Alan Ladd?”
“Maybe you should check her out, Kate,” Gibbs says.
“I’m on it.” Tony says while leaving the house again.
“Where is Agent DiNozzo?” Gamal asks when we get into the camp delta yard.
“They’re bringing Nasir down as soon as the evening prayers are finished.”
“Why aren’t you praying?” Kate asks.
“Kate,” I say in disgusted, “you can’t ask why someone isn’t praying.”
“I’m Presbyterian,” Gamal answers anyway.
“How do you say good cop, bad cop in Arabic?” Gibbs ask as we walk into the detention facility.
“I learned my Arabic at the defence language Institute in Monterey. That phrase wasn’t in the syllabus. Nasir should be here in about five minutes,” Gamal informs us.
“Watch his body language,” Gibbs says to Kate.
“What am I to do boss?” I asks Gibbs.
“Don’t annoy your sister too much,” Gibbs says with a smile, knowing I would annoy her right up to the line.
I follow Kate into the observation room while Gibbs and Gamal goes into the interrogation room.
“Fortunately Nasir speaks some English,” Gamal reads off the file he is carrying.
“Who are you people?” Nasir asks in Arabic once he enters the room.
“He asks who we are,” Gamal translates for Gibbs.
“Name is Gibbs. U.S. Naval Criminal Investigative Service. Sit down,” Gibbs answers.
“Where is Paula?” Nasir asks.
“She’s been replaced. By me.”
“Why?”
“I think you know why.”
“No.”
“Sit down, Nasir, and I’ll tell you why,” Gibbs says again and Nasir does sit down this time.
“Sa’id is dead,” Gibbs informs him, getting straight to the point.
“He’s praying,” Gamal telling him when Nasir starts to mumble.
“Sa’id was a good man. He gave me hope I would see my family again. He said America does not hate Islam. That Allah knows we are here,” Nasir said once he is down praying.
“Don’t you want to know how he died? Or have you guessed?” Gibbs asks.
“He guessed,” Kate said from within the observation room while I pull her hair.
“How would I know? We have no contact here with the outside world,” Nasir informs us.
“He swallowed these. They killed him. I think he got them from you,” Gibbs informs him while showing him a photo of the rocks.
“I don’t understand.” Nasir said making Gamal translate into Arabic.
“He says he’s never seen them before,” Gamal translate what Nasir answers us. “He would like to return to his cell so he can pray for his friend’s soul.”
“Tell him he’s not going back to his cell. He’s being transferred to isolation,” Gibbs informs them.
Nasir jumps up and starts to yell.
“He says he was promised a transfer to minimum security,” Gamal informs us.
“Who promised him that?” Gibbs asks.
“Special agent Cassidy.”
“Why did you recommend transferring Nasir to minimum security?” Gibbs asks Cassidy when Tony and Cassidy gets to the house we are staying in.
“Reward for cooperation. That’s the idea around here,” Cassidy explained to Gibbs.
“We’ve read the transcripts. He didn’t tell us anything we didn’t know,” I inform her.
“Well, that’s not the point. He told us all that he knows.”
“Are you sure?” Gibbs asks her.
“It’s a judgment call. But we get a lot of flak around here for holding people too long. Are you going to tell me what’s going on?”
“Are you going to tell us what was going on between you and Sa’id?” I asks her.
“We worked together. That’s all.”
“These were found in Sa’id’s luggage,” Gibbs informs her while holding up the letter’s we found in
the victim’s bag.
“Well he was going to put them in the mail for me.”
“You couldn’t find the post office?” I ask her.
“Mail slow out of the Gitmo. Sa’id was on his way to the States and I asked him to throw them in the
mail for me.”
“Do you mind if we open them?” Gibbs asks.
“Yes, I mind. They’re private.”
“We’ll get a court order.”
“What the hell is this about? Why do you have these letters? Something happened to Sa’id?”
“He’s dead,” I informs her getting straight to the point.
“Oh, my god. How? What happened?” Cassidy asks and after a beat she added, “Tell me how he
died!”
“Internal bleeding from a perforated bowel caused by the presence of hard objects in his intestines,”
Gibbs asks.
“Hard objects? What the hell is that supposed to mean? Look, I have been a damn good NCIS Agent
for over six years now. I really don’t deserve to be treated like this.”
“All we asked is can we open these letters.”
“Sure. Go head. Open the damn things.”
“Thank you,” Gibbs said them giving me half the letters and we open them and we read what the she
wrote to her family.
“They’re to my family. Would you like to search my apartment while you’re at it?”
“I would.”
“Okay.”
“Sorry, Paula,” Tony whispered while walking past Cassidy.
“Check out Sa’id’s apartment, too,” Gibbs said while throwing each set to Kate and Tony to do as
they are told.
“Are you going to read me my right?” Cassidy asks.
“You have the right to be reimbursed for postage. Put it on your expense report,” Gibbs informs her.
“Thanks.”
“You might want to take that clip off your shoulder,” I inform Cassidy while looking over the file
Gibbs is reading.
“Gladly. Just treat me as a member of the team.”
“We’re in the same agency, not on the same team,” Gibbs informs her.
“Is this interrogation over?”
“Yeah. Yeah, almost. Uh… why is special agent DiNozzo sorry?”
“He blew his chance to get laid from a slut,” I inform Gibbs making Cassidy give me a look.
“Nasir is extremely upset,” Gamal informs us while we are back in the interrogation room, “He feels
he’s been cooperative and now he’s in a cell with no windows.”
“Well maybe after losing all this luxury will make him more cooperative,” Gibbs tells him.
“Well, a psychiatrist examined him and is worried for his mental health.”
“I’m not all that interested in the mental health of people who want to kill me.”
“You’re certain Nasir is a terrorist? Isn’t it possible he is what he says he is, a man who was in the
wrong place at the wrong time?”
“Yes. It’s also possible that he’s the man who gave Sa’id those emeralds.”
“Why would he do that?”
“Are you that naïve or did Nasir pass some of those emeralds onto you?” Gibbs said making Gamal
walking out.
“What are all these bottles Abby?” Gibbs asks when he called her on his computer.
“That’s the perfume you said I could buy,” Abby asked Gibbs while I come into the living room
from the kitchen with coffee for Gibbs and lean on the back of Gibbs chair to talk to Abby too.
“Did you have to buy so many?”
“I only have thirty. There’s more than twenty five hundred on the market.”
“You’re kidding me.”
“Perfume is the most powerful accessory a woman can wear.”
“Yeah, well how much has all this power cost us?”
“Around fifteen hundred.”
“Fifteen hundred dollars?”
“Well, not including the tax. I stuck to the thirty most popular scents hoping we’d get lucky.
“Ah. How fiscally responsible, Ab.”
“Thank you.”
“So… did we get any bang for our fifteen hundred bucks?”
“We did. The perfume on Sa’id’s clothes is called Escada.”
“Never heard of it,” Gibbs and I says out the same time.
“Do you want to hear about his hard drive?”
“What’s it going to cost me?” Gibbs ask.
“It’s pretty much synonymous with his sex drive. Our boy deleted twenty gigs of porn before he turned his drive in. he was trading with a porn pal on a hot mail account that doesn’t exist anymore.”
“Anything good on it?”
“Nothing with sawdust, yet.”
“Anything I would watch,” I ask Abby.
“Nope.”
“Let me know if there is any I would watch,” After I say this Gibbs shuts the computer ending the call.

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“Agent Cassidy’s?” Gibbs ask Tony who searched Cassidy’s apartment.
“Yeah. Uh… and nothing else of interest in her apartment, except,” Tony say and then stops without finishing.
“What?”
“She had a bottle of Escada on her dresser. And Sa’id had a key to her apartment, but she did not have a key to his.
“Most women prefer to do it in their own bed,” I say.
“So she and Sa’id were doing a horizontal salsa,” Gibbs continues for me.
“Not according to the bartender at EL Floridito,” Tony informs us.
“Bartenders know this kind of stuff, boss. He said she went there most nights, danced with a lot of guys, but always went home alone.”
“What’d you find out, Kate?”
“Sa’id place wasn’t just clean. There was some towels, soap and half a roll of toilet paper,” Kate answers Gibbs.
“I think Sa’id copied Paula’s key without her knowing it,” Tony said.
“Now which head is thinking Tony?” I ask him.
“I’m hitting the rack.”
“I didn’t need to know that.”
“Get this off to Abby first thing in the morning,” Gibbs tells Kate.
“You know, Gibbs, sometimes you can be a real,” Kate said but stopped looking for the right word.
“Bastard?” Gibbs and I asks Kate at the same time.
“Yes.”
“Yeah, well my gut is telling me Agent Cassidy is telling the truth,” Gibbs adds on.
“So then what’s the problem?”
“Romance between agents, Kate… it never works.”
“Are you speaking from experience?”
“Sa’id and I were not lovers,” Cassidy said while I head to the room.
I get my clothes and head into the bathroom and have a bath. Only I am finished bathing, I put on a big shirt and climb into the bed and go to sleep for the night.

I wake up the next morning and find that my head is on Gibbs chest again, I gently and carefully, as not to wake Gibbs up. I make coffee in the kitchen for everyone, once the coffee is ready I start on breakfast.

“Thanks Alice,” Gibbs said while taking the coffee and breakfast.

“You’re welcome Gibbs, and Cassidy is having lunch at this place today,” I inform Gibbs while handing him the map I have printed out for him.

“Thanks.”

After I get breakfast I head into the room and get changed for the day.

“What the hell are Easter eggs?” Gibbs asks Abby when she called him about the porn again.

“Easter eggs are hidden messages within a computer program,” I inform Gibbs.

“If you don’t know where to look, you don’t know they’re there,” Abby continues for me.

“They were hidden in the porn?” Gibbs asks.

“Really, can I see?” I asks Abby while leaning over Gibbs to get closer to the computer to see if I can see it.

“My cursor has moved across places that would make Tony blush,” Abby answers while giving me a look of amusement.

“What kind of messages?” Gibbs asks while pushing me away from the computer again.

“There’s a diagram of the camp and a bunch of stuff in Arabic. It’s coming to you now. Something tells me it’s not a greeting from the bunny.”

arrived Gitmo April twenty third. April twenty eighth he writes ‘son-in-law located.’ May eleventh ‘son-in-law moved to minimum security.’ May twenty third he gets a response. ‘Leader disavows son in law. He will be eliminated by the one who is victorious,’” Gamal informs us what was hidden in the porn.

“Leader?” Tony asks.


“My god. We’ve got one of Bin Laden’s son in law here and didn’t know it,” Kate said.

“The one who is victorious? Why does he start talking in riddles all of a sudden?”

“I don’t think he is. I may not be translating that accurately,” Gamal informs us. “Nasir is old Arabic for ‘the one who is victorious.’ I own you an apology, Gibbs. If I’d transferred Nasir into minimum security.”

“You didn’t. Don’t worry about it.”

“How do we find this son-in-law?” Tony asks.

“Easy. We transfer Nasir to minimum security so he can kill him,” I inform everyone.

“At camp delta the security buck stops with me. If Nasir kills a detainee, it’ll be my ass,” a guy by the name of MC Clarffertly informs us when we ask to put Nasir into the minimum security.

“Yeah. But once the son-in-law learns that bin Laden order him murdered, he’s going to sing like a bird in Islamic paradise and maybe that prevents another Nine Eleven,” Gibbs informs him.

“What’s your plan agent Gibbs?”

“We transfer Nasir to minimum security.”

“From isolation to minimum security?” he’s bound to be suspicious,” Gamal inform us like we don’t already know this.

“A new interrogator will have to deliver the news convincingly,” Tony says.

“Since we know he trust women, that’s me,” Kate said.

“Women?” I ask while laughing at Kate.

“No, that’s me. I’m the one he trusts,” Cassidy cuts in while closing the door behind her.

“You promised him minimum security. He hot isolation. He won’t believe you have the authority to move him,” Gibbs tells her.
“He will when I order the guards to remove the shackles.”
“That’s risky,” Tony tells him.
“Tony right,” Kate says.
“Oh my god, Kate said tony is right. That’s it, I am late for the snow ball fight on the devils front lawn,” I say while snapping my fingers and start to walk out the room. Gibbs grabs my arm and pulled me back to his side.
“Nasir and Sa’id did this right in front of me,” Cassidy said to us while giving Gibbs and me a look.
“You’re an interrogator, bot a translator. You couldn’t have known,” Kate said to Cassidy while giving me her natural annoyances look that she always uses on my.
“But I did. I had suspicions about Sa’id and I let them slide. It’s inexcusable.”
“Yep,” Gibbs says.
“Let me make up for it.”
“How good an actress are you, agent Cassidy?”
“Ask Tony. He bought my act.”
“Icing me was an act?” Tony asks.
“No. letting you think I was melting was.”

“Tony, she’d say anything to get in that room,” Kate tells Tony when we all get into the observation room while Cassidy goes into the interrogation room.
“Kate, it’s not a problem. We were both playing a game,” Tony informs us.
“Hello, Nasir,” Cassidy said when Nasir walked into the room.
“I did not expect we’d meet again,” Nasir explained to her.
“Neither did I,” Cassidy said and then turned to the guard and said, “Remove the shackles,” after a beat she added, “Now please.”
“Where is Gibbs?” Nasir asks.
“Recalled to Washington. His superiors determined that his concerns were unfounded.”
“Agent Gibbs was recalled to Washington. It was determined by his superiors that his concerns were unfounded,” Gamal inform Nasir in Arabic when he only looks confused at Cassidy.
“He’s not buying it,” Kate says it.
“He will,” Tony says.
“I don’t. How does anyone believe a word she says?” I asks.
“Agent Gibbs has had problems in the past,” Cassidy informs Nasir.
“Agent Cassidy, this is inappropriate,” Gamal says to Cassidy.
“I agree with Bill,” I tell everyone in the observation room.
“He deserves to know. He has a history of building cases at the expense of the facts,” Cassidy said making me give the two-way mirror the finger, to Gamal she said, “Tell him.
“Gibbs has a history of building cases at the expense of the fact,” Gamal explains to him in Arabic.
“She good,” Gibbs overlaps him.
“She is a bitch, is more likely,” I say.
“I was locked up like a dog,” Nasir informs her.
“It was out of my hands, Nasir. I’m sorry. I’ve arranged to have you returned to your cell. Just answer one question. Do you have a conscience?” Cassidy asks him.
“Do you have a conscience?” Gamal asks in Arabic.
“I have a moral awareness of my actions,” Nasir informs her.
“Good. Because I’ve trusted you, Nasir,” Cassidy informs him.
“I am glad you are back.”
“So am I,” Cassidy said while waking to the door.
“She’s ending the session. What is she doing?” Kate asks in confusion.
“Playing him,” Tony answers her.
“What about my transfer to minimum security you promised?” Nasir asks in Arabic.
“He’s asking about the transfer to minimum security promised him,” Gamal translates.
"I'll try," Cassidy answers him, then walks out of the room.

“We have a hundred and twenty detainees in minimum security at present. Twenty to a unit. Barracks twenty is the one Nasir is assigned to. And this… that’s the inside surveillance cam,” MC Clarfferty explained while we travel in a command vehicle.

“How many guards inside the barracks?” Gibbs asks him.

“Two. One at each exit. Front and rear.” Odds are six to one against his target being billeted in the same barracks as him,” Tony said.

“That means Nasir is going to have to kill his target in the exercise yard. What does secret service think? Gibbs asks Kate.

“Three sharpshooters. There, there and one in the watch tower,” Kate said while pointing it out on the map.

“I have an idea,” I inform everyone.

“It’s about time,” Gibbs tells me.

“Nasir has to change his jumpsuit when he transfers, right?”

“Spankin’ brand new white one. So?”

“I want to add a little trim to it.”

“There. Right there. They’re bringing him out now,” Mc Clarfferty informs us while pointing to the camera on Nasir clothe, hidden as a button.

“Talk about your own personal webcam,” Tony says.

“We only did enough of a search to keep it legitimate.”

“You think he already has a weapon?”


“That makes sense. Easy to conceal,” Mc Clarfferty said.

“How does he make a shiv in a max security?” Kate asks.

“A comb, a toothbrush, something innocuous sharped to the point,” I inform Kate.

“You’re good. Bet you could have made it in Hollywood,” Tony tells Cassidy.

“I don’t think you’ll be right or wrong about Nasir,” Cassidy said.

“He’s a killer. It’s in his eyes,” Gibbs informs her.

“Yeah. The eyes always give you way,” Tony said.

“Oh. Yeah. Alice, when this goes down, can you stay here please,” Gibbs orders in a questions form. We all watch the monitor, I lead my head on Gibbs arm so I can see it better. “Oh, yeah,” Gibbs says when the MP talk in Arabic to the prisoners telling them they are moving out.

“Nasir whispers to another detainee, making the MP yell, "No talking," in Arabic.

“You target is the fifth detainee to exit. Acknowledge when you have him in your sights,” MC Clarfferty informs us while we all watch the monitor.

“Roger that. Okay, I’ve got him,” the guard said to everyone.

“Give me the ball,” Nasir says in Arabic to another detainee.

“Keep in line! Keep in line,” the MP yells out when Nasir kicks the ball into the air and everyone tried to catch it.

“That’s a diversion,” Gibbs yells.

“I lost my target. No shot,” the guard informs us.

“My sniper’s lost his target,” MC Clarfferty informs us.

“He’s heading in the opposite direction, Gibbs! He switched groups,” I yell while grabbing his arm in a tight hold.

“He’s going into the barracks twenty one,” Gibbs says while grabbing my hand in his, to calm me down.

“He’s made his man. Where are your guards, Colonel?” I asks.

Gibbs let go of my hand as everyone ran out to stop the murderer. I wait and watch what is happening.
“She looks awfully lonely back there,” Kate says while look back at Cassidy in the gulf stream the next day.
“So?” Gibbs ask her.
“She is one of us.”
“Kate.”
“What? Well, I can’t let her alone,” Kate said while getting up but Tony quickly stands up and walking over to her.
“Why is it that women always want to fix what doesn’t need fixing?” Gibbs ask while Kate laughs at what she did.
“This women thing again? Are we all looking at the same person?” I ask Gibbs while pointing at Kate.
“It makes us feel all warm inside,” Kate answers while kicking me.
“Why do you live with Kate? And not you parents?” Gibbs asks me once Kate walked away.
“It’s a long story,” I say without answering the question.
“Alice.”
“My mum’s husband, Kate’s dad, broke my arm. Kate found out six months later and took me into her home away from him.”
“He abused you? Why?”
“Mum got drunk and nine months later, I arrived. He was not in town that week.”
“So that is not your fault.”
“I know that. But he thinks it is,” after I said this, I lean my head on the back of the chair and went to sleep.
Who do you think Alice’s father is?

“Shooters at the ready position,” a range officer yells over the P.A.
“Nervous, Kate?” Tony asks from where he is standing in the middle of Kate and me.
“Shaking,” Kate answers right before the horn goes off to start shooting.
“Cease fire! Cease fire! Clear and lock all weapons! All locked. Now shooters check your targets,”
the same range officer yells over the PA after a couple minutes of shooting.
“Are you nervous, Tony?” Kate ask Tony as we walk up the target to see how we went with our
shoots.
“Nice Tactical reload. You only got your guy twice. I win,” Tony tells Kate.
“What are you talking about? You shot the hostage’s ear off.”
“She’ll live.”
“Yeah, without an ear.”
“How the hell are you both so bad at this? You have been in law for hundreds of years, yet you can’t
hit your target?” I ask them.
“Not bad. Both of you, not bad. Of course these targets don’t shoot back,” Gibbs says once he has
walked up to the targets.
“That must be next week,” Kate said next.
“I’ll wait her, it’s not like they can hit me,” I offer Gibbs.
“Kate I think you’re holding back. Shoot with confidence. Relax your shoulders. Tony, that’s a nice
grouping,” Gibbs informs her.
“So I win,” Tony cuts in.
“Oh, we’re just getting warmed up. And Alice would have won this round,” Gibbs said making Kate
and Tony look at my target to see I got every shot into the middle of the target, “Give me your
cover.”
“What for? Right,” Tony asks but say right when Gibbs just holds his hand out, tony gives his hat to
Gibbs. Gibbs tapes the hat to the target. “Oh, come on, boss! I’ve been breaking that cap in for three
months. I love that cap!”
“Then don’t shot it,” Kate said while handing Gibbs her hat.
“Did you back this up?” Gibbs ask after taking her hat and putting it back on her head. He grabbed
her external hard drive and tapping it to her target.
“Oh, no, no, Gibbs. Come on. My whole life is in that thing! Gibbs come on.”
“Then don’t shoot it,” Gibbs said while walking over to me. Gibbs undoes my horse belt and pulls it
out of my pants, and tapes it onto my target.
“Come on Gibbs, that is not nice,” I say while trying to grab my belt back, “that is my favourite belt.
Give it back.”
“If we screw this up I have a suggestion,” Kate said while we all walk back up to shot again.
“If it will hurt Gibbs, I am in,” I inform Kate while glaring at Gibbs back.
“You really love that belt?” Tony ask me.
“No, don’t get her started, she won’t ever stop.”
“What?”
“We break into Gibbs’ basement and we set his boat on fire.”
“That’s cold, Kate. I knew there was a reason I liked you.”
“Gibbs. Yeah, we’re on it,” Gibbs said into his phone.
“What’s up?” Tony asks with hope in his voice.
“A Marine wife buried her husband yesterday. Somebody thought it would be fun to call her up on
the phone and harass her.”
“Since when do we investigate crank calls?” Kate asks.
“Since the guy calling is claiming to be her dead husband.”

“On the firing line. Ready on the right. Ready on the left. Ready on the,” the range officer goes again.

“Fire. Steady under pressure,” Gibbs tell us.

“I’ll bring the lighter fluid,” Tony tells Kate.

“Seal,” Kate said while we all took aim and fired.

“Most of these cases, the caller turns out to be someone you know – old boyfriend, co-worker,” Gibbs says to Sarah, the victim’s wife who is getting the phone calls, we are sitting her living room.

“Listen, I know it sounds crazy. But the voice? I swear it was Jim’s,” Sarah informs us.

“It’s okay, everything will be fine. I was thinking, is there any recording of him that someone can get his voice off?” I ask her while pulling her into a hug.

“Sometime in situations like that, you hear what you think sounds like someone you know,” Kate cuts in before Sarah can answer me.

“I’d like to put a trace on your phone, Mrs Kidwell, in case he calls back,” Gibbs cuts Kate off.

“What happens if it’s Jim?” Sarah asks Gibbs.

“We find out why someone lied about him dying,” I inform her. The doorbell rings when I finish telling her that.

“Excuse me,” Sarah said while going to see who is at the door.

“Generally have been her husband, could it?” Kate asks Gibbs.

“Agent Gibbs, agent Todd and Miss Todd, this is Lisa Peary. Her husband was in the same unit as Jim’s. They um,” Sarah said while stopping to look for the right word without upsetting her friend.

“Died together,” Lisa said without through.

“You have our sympathies,” Kate says in the most sympathic tone she can use.

“What we’d really like is some answers. You know, we accepted the fact that our husbands couldn’t always tell us where they were, what they were doing. We played the game. We were good Marine wives.”

“You have to understand, all we got back were two sealed caskets,” Lisa explained to us.

“And now Sarah gets this call from Jim.”

“Or someone impersonating him, Mrs Pearly,” Kate says.

“We don’t even know how they died. Are you telling me you wouldn’t start to wonder?” Lisa informs us.

“What did you find out about our dead Marine?” Gibbs asks when we got back into the squad room.

“He was involved in classified stuff,” Tony informs us.

“And?” I asks him.

“No and. I didn’t have high enough clearance to access the records.”

“What’s your clearance?” Kate ask him next.

“Confidential.”

“Confidential? What did you do, kill someone in high school?”

“Ha! Not funny, Kate. No, they screwed up my paperwork with another agent’s.”


“So that is what the smell is? And here I thought it was you Kate,” I say while moving over to Tony desk to look at his computer.

“Hey,” Tony yells before explaining it to us, “they yanked my clearance. Now I’ve got to take a physical to get it back.”

“Yes that?” Kate asks him.

“To prove that I’m still alive.”

“Oh, well you are going to fail that,” I say that.

“Any luck?” Gibbs ask when he sees Kate leaning over keyboard typing.

“Access denied! And I was cleared for Air Force One,” Kate exclaimed.

“So was an Al Qaeda operative. And Gibbs,” I say while Gibbs walks over and try’s himself.
“Gibbs will get in. He’s got clearance that will let him see the dead aliens at Area Fifty One,” Tony informs Kate and me.

“Because he probably killed them,” Kate said next.

“Yeah, they took his coffee,” I inform them with a straight face.

“Hm. Looks like someone is deliberately blocking us,” Gibbs said when he got access denied.

“Or a glitch. Everything doesn’t have to be a conspiracy against NCIS guys,” Kate says.

“Nope it because you work for them that nothing works. Well that and because Tony is dead but hey he still comes to work,” I exclaim.

“Are you saying we’re paranoid, Kate?” Gibbs ask while smacking my leg on the way past.

“If the shoe fits,” Kate says to him.

“Yeah, Gibbs. Uh-huh. I know where it is. Mu-hmm,” Gibbs said into his phone after it started ring.

“That was Kidwell and Peary’s commanding officer. We are being blocked,” Gibbs tells us once he hangs the phone up.

“Okay, I admit. That is strange.”

“He wants to meet with us.”

“When?”

“Right now. Let’s roll,” Gibbs said as Kate throws him, her broken in hair.

“Thanks for the new cap, Kate,” Tony says to her.

“Not a problem. I only wish my warranty covered bullets,” Kate said while looking at her hard drive and then dropping it into the bin.

“This is my favourite belt” I said while looking at my belt that has a knife hole in it, thanks to Tony and Kate.

“I appreciate you meeting me out here. I want to keep this conversation off the record,” Walsh said when we got into the parking lot.

“Why is that, Colonel Walsh?” Gibbs asks him.

“Because Kidwell and Peary were good men.”

“Their widow’s seem to think so,” Kate informs him.

“I want to keep it that way. Are you familiar with mobile training teams?”

“Sure, they serve as military for foreign counter,” Tony answers Walsh.

“Among other things. Kidwell and Peary were working out of country. Op was classified, but had nothing to do with their deaths.”

“Why seal the records then?” I ask him.

“Because of the way they died. Look, when you work with a foreign military, you kind of have to go native. You have to live and breathe the culture. Kidwell and Peary tended to take that approach to the extreme.”


“We found them in a brothel. They had a dispute with one of the local prostitutes. She poisoned them.”

“With what?” Gibbs and I ask him.

“Local police said formaldehyde.”

“Formaldehyde?” Tony asks him.

“It is the stuff they put into the dead bodies to make them look nice for the funeral,” I inform him.

“She put it in their drinks,” Walsh informs us.

“So you used the classified nature of the operation to cover it up,” Kate states.

“I didn’t exactly want to call Lisa and Sarah and tell them that their husbands died because they pissed off a whore.”

“Why do you call Mrs Kidwell and Peary by their first name but their husband by their last?” I ask him while tilting my head to the right side, like I can get the answer by looking at him the right way.

“Probably a good call,” Tony said when Walsh didn’t answer my question.

“Look, they weren’t angels but they were damn good Marines. I’d rather they be remembered that way,” Walsh explained to us while giving me a look when the thought no one was looking but
Gibbs was.
“Any idea why someone would call Mrs Kidwell and impersonate him?” Gibbs asked while gently
pushing me a little behind him.
“None, but I hope you catch that son of a bitch. Look, if you’ll excuse me, I have to get back to
work.”
“Just one more thing, Colonel. I’m still going to need to see their records.”
“I just told you what happened.”
“Yeah. Yeah, you did.”
“I’ll see what I can do,” Walsh said before walking away.
“His body language matches that of someone telling the truth,” Kate informs us.
“OR he’s one hell of a liar,” I inform them with a pout on my face.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone when it was ringing. “What did you find? Were you able
to track it? The marine base at Quantico,” Gibbs answers before ending the call and running away to
a training office building.
“Can I help you sir?” Travis asks him while I hide behind him.
“NCIS. We need to talk to your CO, Lieutenant Colonel Walsh,” Gibbs said while gesturing to us
all.
“He’s in a meeting tight now, sir,” Travis explained to us while pointing to the door.
“Here?” Gibbs asks while going to the door.
“Sir, I don’t think you heard me?”
“Oh, heard you,” Tony informed him.
“He just doesn’t care,” I inform him while walking in myself.
“Sir,” Travis calls us again.
We all walk down the hall to the office room and brazened into the office.
“Where’s Colonel Walsh?” Gibbs asked when we can’t see him anywhere.
“Right here,” the guy at the end of the table said.
“Someone is going to a lot of trouble over a crack phone call, Colonel,” Gibbs inform the second
Walsh, once we get into Walsh’s office.
“Like an illegal wiretap on Sarah Kidwell’s phone,” Kate informs him.
“And a guy pretending his you,” Tony continues for her.
“We want to know why,” I inform him while looking at everything in his office and even moving
some of the things in it including the paperwork.
“That makes two of us, Miss Todd. You think I like getting Marines back in boxes?” Walsh asks me.
“I thing you have got so many that it doesn’t matter to you anymore,” I inform him while walking
back to stand next to Gibbs.
“Why don’t we start with how Major Kidwell and Peary died?” Gibbs asks him while giving me his
’stop-it-now,’ look.
“That’s a ‘need to know,’” Walsh informs him while giving me a look of hate for what I said, but I
just struggled my shoulder at him without a care in the world.
“Trust me, I need to know,” Gibbs said getting the attention off me again.
“Unfortunately it seems I don’t. Their records are sealed and every inquiry I’ve made has been shot
down.”
“Why have two dead Marines, colonel. Are you trying to tell me you don’t know how they died?”
“This is an Admin Command. When my teams deploy, they can be working for any one of a dozen
agencies. They don’t report to me.”
“Who did Kidwell and Peary report to?”
“Officially the state department.”
“Unofficially.”
“You’ll have to figure that one out for yourselves, Agent Gibbs.”
“Now what does that sound like to you tony?”
“It sounds like one of the A’s. CIA, NSA,” Tony answers him without through.
“About those boxes you got back, Colonel?”

“What about them?” Walsh asks him.

“Did you stop to see if your men were inside them? Or is that need to know too?” I ask him.

“Make the eyes bigger, Abby,” Tony said while leaning over her to see the program to create the face of our fake, Walsh. I am sitting on the desk behind them with a book on my lap and a pencil in my hand.

“No! The eyes are fine. It’s the nose that needs to be bigger, Abby,” Kate said while leaning over the other shoulder.

“Okay, I’ll get an APB out on Pinocchio right away.”

“You guys,” Abby said to them.

“Welcome to our world,” I inform Abby while Gibbs walks into her office with a caf-pow and hands it to her.

“Thank you, Gibbs,” Abby said to Gibbs while drinking her caf-pow.

“Anyone want to explain this?” Gibbs ask while pointing to a screwed up face on the computer.

“Tony and Kate are fighting over what the first Walsh looks like. They can’t seem to remember,” I inform him without looking up from my book again.

“Mm, we haven’t quite settled on the nose yet, though,” Tony adds while pointing to the big nose on the computer.

“Yeah, I can see that, DiNozzo,” Gibbs said to him.

“Uh listen, boss, we need a few more minutes, so if you want to go grab a coffee or,” Tony pointed out.

“I have a better idea. Pull Kidwell and Peary’s LES’s for me. Kate and I will…”

“I can do that. That is if you want me to. It’s just that Tony seems to have a better handle on the program here,” Kate informs him.

“Okay,” Gibbs said while Kate and leave the room.

“What’s an LES?”

“Leave and Earning Statement,” I inform her while walking into the elevator to get it done. While Kate talks with Tony.

“Ducky! Nice. While you were playing I sketched our fake colonel,” Kate said and then showed them, I look at my book of my drawing and then just close it without showing them because they are all impresses with Kate’s.

“I’m impressed,” Gibbs said while looking at it.

“Let me see that. What the-?” Tony said while taking Kate book and start to fillip throw them.

“That’s personal,” Kate yells while trying to get it back.

“Yeah, it is. Do I really seem like that?” Tony ask when he comes to the drawing of him checking out a chick.

“I’m really impressed now,” Gibbs said while looking at the drawing.

“Abby, I didn’t mean anything by that. It’s,” Kate said in a rush when Tony found the drawing of a bat with Abby’s head as its head.

“I love that? You gotta let me hang it up,” Abby said with a smile.

“I can’t wait to see the one you did of Gibbs and Alice,” Tony said while looking for said drawings.

“Oh, just give me that,” Kate said while taking back her book and closing it while turning to Gibbs and said to him, “Uh… so Kansas City said it would take twenty four hours to get the Leave and Earnings Statements.”

“You’ve got twelve. I want them first thing in the morning. Abby, run his likeness through. We’ll concentrate on Government employee databases and D-O-D personnel,” Gibbs tells her.

“You got it, Gibbs,” Abby said while looking at the drawing of the fake colonel and her as a bat.

“What does he expect to find from their LES’s?” Kate ask Tony once Gibbs had left the room.

“Come on, Kate. That’s like NCIS one oh one,” Tony answered her.

“You have no idea, do you?”
“Not a clue.”
“He wants to know who they were working for at the time of death,” I informs them.

“Kate, twelve hours was up fifteen minutes ago,” Gibbs said while walking over to his desk with his morning coffee.

“Next time, have them fix them in order,” Tony hissed at Kate.

“Point taken. Gibbs, are you going to tell us what these are for?” Kate asks Gibbs.

“Agent Gibbs,” Sarah said before Gibbs can answer her.

“Mrs Kidwell,” Gibbs said while standing back up.

“There was another phone call.”

“And this time we have proof that Jim’s still alive,” O’Donnell informs us while holding up an answering machine record, “Jim left a message on my machine the same day he called Sarah.” He said as we move into the lab to process everything.

“The funeral?” Tony asks him.

“Yes. With everything that was going on I didn’t have time to check my messages until this morning.”

“You seem pretty confident that’s Kidwell, Major,” Gibbs said to him.

“I’ve known Jim since we were Second Lieutenants at the basic school. It’s his voice, agent Gibbs.”

“Well, we’re about to find out, Abby?”

“Ahh! Sorry,” Abby said when Gibbs scared her because she has headphones on.

“Let’s see what you’ve got.”

“Ok this… this is the old school version.”

“Danny… tell Sarah… trust… got… find Peary… call mobile,” Kidwell said on the tap that is filtered to make it understandable.

“You can tell it’s him from that?” Gibbs asks.

“Well, lucky for you, you’ve got a mix master in the hizzouse,” Abby informs him.

“A what?”

“It means house. You need to get out more, Gibbs,” Tony translates her him.

“Word. Okay, here’s the filtered version,” Abby informs her.

“Danny, tell Sarah… trust… got… find Peary. Called mobile,” Abby played the tape again.

“I ran it against six word samples I have from the Kidwell’s home videos. They didn’t match.”

“So it’s not Kidwell on the tape?” Tony asks her.

“That’s what I thought at first, too, but I forgot to factor in the phone line. Ma Bell eliminates any frequency that’s below four hundred hertz and above three thousand four hundred. It allows for moderate distance transmission. That’s why when people think they sound differently on the phone, they do. It’s all about the band.”

“Mix master. Today,” Gibbs cuts in when she stops to breath.

“Danny, tell Sarah… trust… got… find Peary. Called mobile,” Abby played the tape again.

“We’ve got a dead man calling,” Abby informs us with excitement.

“What is going on with you?” Gibbs ask me when he walked into the bullpen and everyone else is gone doing their job.

“I don’t know what you are talking about,” I say without looking up from his computer that I am using to right what we have found so far.

“Yes you do, you have not annoyed Kate once today. You are upset about something, so what is it?”

“Alice talk to me,” Gibbs said while pulling me out of the chair to stand in front of him so I can’t not answer him.

“It doesn’t matter. Really Gibbs,” I whisper while trying to move back to the computer but he just pulls me closer to between his legs so I can’t get away.

“Alice, has someone done or said something to you? Why are you so quiet? I want to help you but I can’t do that if you don’t tell me what’s wrong.”
“I’m not helping you or anyone on the cases but pissing people off,” I say quietly in the hopes that he wouldn’t hear me.

“You have helped us heaps, and if you didn’t annoy people you wouldn’t be you.”

“But I’m not as good as Kate,” I cry to him making him understand what the problem really is.

“So, she is better them you at somethings,” Gibbs starts but I try to get away thinking he didn’t think I was good at anything. Gibbs just keeps me in place, he adds, “But you are better at things them her too. Everyone has things they are good at and somethings they ain’t. But you can’t change that.”

“But I’m not as good as Kate,” I whisper before adding, “I’m just wasting your time.”

“Hey, you’re not doing that, if you where I wouldn’t have you on my team if you were.”

“But I’m not as good as Kate. I’m just a failure,” I cry while the tears start to fall.

“I don’t understand.”

“If, if I’m not as good as Kate, I’m no good.”

“You are not Kate, it doesn’t matter if you are as good as her or not.”

“But everyone likes her better because she can do everything,” I inform Gibbs and it becomes apparent to him what has happened. He gently pull me into his chest and start to rub my hair to calm me down before we continues to talk about this.

“I think you are just as valuable to this team as Kate or Tony,” Gibbs informs me while rubbing my hair and back still.

“But if I’m not as good as Kate, how am I valuable?” I ask him, truly not understanding it.

“By being yourself. Why don’t you tell me why you thing you have to as good as the same things, as Kate?”

“Because dad will love me if I’m good like her,” I inform him while grabbing his shirt when he tries to move away from me.

“Oh, Alice. He doesn’t deserve your love if he can’t love you for being yourself.”

“But if my own father can’t love me, how can anyone else?”

“Because you are you. Everyone likes you for it, plus we never know what you are going to say. Know why don’t you show me what had you so existed before?”

“I don’t know what you are talking about,” I say while hiding my face in his chest.

“Come on, what was in the book you have been obsessing over?”

“It doesn’t matter, Gibbs. I...”

“It does to you, so it do to me. Come on and show me or I’ll grab it myself and make you work with the director.”

“Please don’t laugh.”

“I promise,” Gibbs said while letting my go to get the book out of my bag. I hand it to him while not looking at him. He flips through the drawings to see what I had drawn. On the last page her found the one I draw today of our fake colonel, but I draw both him from the front and the side while Kate only draw him from the front. Other drawings include, Tony getting hit by a car while checking out Kate. Kate sitting at her desk but she has a devil tails and horns while holding the devil’s fork. Abby working in her lab but she is a bat that is flying around with the evidence to process it. On is of Gibbs at a crime scene holding his coffee but that is it.

“I know that they aren’t very good but I’m working on it,” I inform him while looking at the floor still.

“This are good, do you mind if I get Abby to copy this for her search for the fake colonel?” Gibbs ask me while holding up the drawing of the fake colonel.

“While it help?”

“Yes, it gives her a better idea what he looks like.”

“If you think it while help.”

“Of course it will help. Why didn’t you show us this before?”

“Because you were looking at Kate’s drawing.”

“No matter what is happening, we will always be happy to see what you have done.”

“You promise? You’re not just saying that?”

“I promise.”
“Thank you Gibbs,” I say without looking at him still.
“Hey, you don’t have to be as good as Kate or anyone else. You just have to be yourself.”
“Okay.”
“Now come here,” Gibbs said while signalling for me to move closer to him. Once I was standing in front of him, he gently pulled me into a hug again.
“I sorry, I made such a big thing out of this.”
“You were hurt and you weren’t going to tell me, I dragged it out of you.”
“I’m sorry I made you worry,” I tell him what I meet.
“It’s okay. I wish you didn’t have the life you had but I can help up get more confidence in yourself. Know come on Kate and Tony should be back with Kidwell’s body.”
“Thank you for caring for me Gibbs.’
“No problem,” Gibbs said while walking to the autopsy room.
“Sorry I couldn’t help you with the digging, boys. Old pro basketball injury,” Tony said while watching two people wheeling in a casket while Gibbs and I walk into the room and stay by the door.
“You played pro ball?” Kate asks him in surprise.
“Well, I was watching a game while it happened. Top’s been screwed shut, boss,”
“They obviously didn’t want anyone looking in before the funeral.”
“Or getting out,” I mumble while Tony says it loader for all to hear.
“I didn’t see why Sarah can’t be present for this?” O’Donnell said.
“Do you know what’s in this box, Major O’Donnell?” Gibbs asks while grabbing my hand.
“No, but it’s not Jim Kidwell unless he’s figured out a way calls from the grave.”
“Well, you know what – we’re going to find out.”
“Don’t we have to wait for Ducky?” Kate asks us.

“Is the body going to walk away?” I ask her while Tony grabs a drill to open the casket.
“I’m just hoping it’s not another mummy,” Tony says while pulling out the last screw.
“Oh, my god!” O’Donnell exclaims when Gibbs and Tony slowly open the lid on the casket.
“I’ve got to admit, I wasn’t expecting that,” Tony said when we see that Kidwell’s body is in the casket.
“He looks alive,” Kate exclaims while looking at the body.
“It’s uh… It’s Jim,” O’Donnell informs us.

“We sure screwed that up,” Kate said when we get back into the squad room, while Sarah sobbed over the fact that her husband is really dead.
“Yep. Still doesn’t explain the cover up and fake Colonel,” Tony informs her.
“They’re called Classified Ops for a reason, Tony. We’ll probably never know.”
“The phone call? Your calling plan include the afterlife, Kate?”
“Voice recognition isn’t an exact science.”
“Neither is Gibbs’ gut, and he’s convinced there’s more going on here than a crank call.”
“Well, I hate to break it to you, Tony, but Gibbs can be wrong sometimes.”
“Name once,” I ask her without looking away from Gibbs computer where I am trying to finish the report I started earlier.
“The man’s been married like four times.”
“So? Some people just want to be love.”
“There is that,” Tony said in a thoughtful look on his face.
“There is what?” Gibbs asks him when he walks up behind Tony without him hearing him.
“Nothing, boss. Just discussing the case.”
“Or a lack thereof. Do you still want to take a look at those LES’s?” Kate asks Gibbs while he come over to his desk and pulls me out of the chair and sitting down himself.
“I don’t know. Have you figured out how Kidwell died yet?”
“I’ll um… I’ll just get them in order for you,” She said while doing just that.
“Kate?” Gibbs calls to her.
“It was three times. Not four,” I inform her when she looks over at Gibbs.

“I’m afraid we’ve got a bit of a mystery here, Gibbs,” Ducky informs us when we walked into autopsy.

“Tell me something I don’t know, Duck,” Gibbs said to him.

“Major appears to be in perfect health.”

“Except for that part where he is dead and calling his wife from behind. We would like to know how he died and when,” I enlighten him while moving around the autopsy bed to look at the body.

“How I’m still working on. When is another question entirely? Yes, the young man has been embalmed.”

“And whoever did the job was definitely a pro,” Gerald buts into the conversation.

“How can you tell?” Tony asks while looking at the body.

“My grandfather owned a funeral home. We spent a lot of quality time bonding over the embalming table.”

“Do you know what a trocar is, Tony?” Ducky asks him.

“I’m guessing it’s not an alien on Star Trek?” Tony asks in return.

“’Tis from the French trocar. Three quarts. It’s used to enter the abdominal cavities so that the lungs and other major organs can be drained of fluids,” I inform him before Ducky can.

“But as you can see, whoever did this barely left a mark,” Ducky continued on for me.

“He does look good for a dead guy,” Tony informs us.

“I would date him, if he was younger and not dead,” I say without looking at anyone but the body.

“Well, skin tone is simulated by dyes. Every mortician has his own family recipe. This is one of the best I’ve seen,” Ducky says while giving me a look, not that I was looking at him.

“How can you tell?” Tony asks while looking at the body.

“That’s possible. But the tox screens wouldn’t be able to detect it.”

“Why’s that?” Tony asks him.

“His blood’s been replaced by embalming fluid, formaldehyde, methanol, ethanol. Looking for another toxin would be like looking for a needle in a haystack.”

“A dead Marine with no obvious cause of death and someone who didn’t want us digging him up. Give you any ideas, Ducky?” Gibbs tells him.

“One in particular does come to mind.”

“Me, too. Keep looking. I’ll need an answer soon,” Gibbs said before him and I walk to the elevator to go back to the bullpen.

“Kidwell’s leave and earning statements are on top. Two years’ worth. Now what?” Kate informs us while we walk into the bullpen.

“Even top spooks get paid,” Gibbs informs her while sitting down at his desk.

“And this will help us because?”

“The government records everything, Kate. Days at sea, when they received hazardous duty and combat pay.”

“Divorces,” I add while cutting Gibbs off.

“His records may be sealed, but if we follow his pay check,” Gibbs continues while giving me his shut up look.

“We’ll find out where he was stationed,” Kate adds on when Gibbs stops talking to let her finish it.

“And who was paying him,” Tony adds for her.
“I already told you this,” I inform them while reading Gibbs notes to see what I have to write.
“You have one hour to break that down for me,” Gibbs informs them.
“Oh, red tape that is actually useful. Who knew?” Kate asks.
“Gibbs. But you know what really ticks me off?” Tony answers.
“Gibbs?”
“No. These guys get paid more than I do.”
“Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone. “Well why don’t we start with, who is this? Well, exactly who is interrogating you, Mrs Peary? When did this happen?” Where? We’ll be there in fifteen minutes. Does he know I’m on the phone talking to you? See if you can’t keep him there until I get there.”
“September his unit code changed to three zero three seven zero. His D-S-N-N changed to,” Kate reads off the L-O-D for Tony to write on his computer.
“Slow down! Slow down, please!” Tony informs her while looking her the right letter.
“How could you work in law enforcement your entire life and not learn how to type?”
“I’m a man of action, Kate.”
“Yeah, he blows his boss or takes it up the ass and then doesn’t have to type,” I inform Kate without looking up from Gibbs computer.
“More like an action figure,” Kate tells him.
“Why? Do you want to play with me?” Tony asks her while they both ignoring me.
“As in you look good but you really can’t do much.”
“But I look good,” Tony said while pointing his fingers up to the roof.
“Uh,” Kate asks while Gibbs walks out of the elevator.
“Gibbs, how is there anything you want to tell us about?” I ask Gibbs while he storms over to the desk I’m out and put his gun in the draw without me getting up.
“I got shot at by our fake Colonel,” Gibbs informs us.
“No way! Did you nail him?” Tony asks him while I got up and pushed him into the chair.
“Nope. What did you guys find?”
“Right. Um… in September Peary and Kidwell were transferred from SATCOM to a new unit,” Kate read to Gibbs.
“We’ve got the RUC number but they’re not listed in Marine Corps database,” Tony continues for her.
“They wouldn’t be. They weren’t working for the Corps. Definitely CIA,” Gibbs said while taking a sip of his coffee to calm himself down while I gently rub his shoulders to help.
“How do you know that?” Kate asks him.
“How many agencies you know that drives economy class armoured cars? Come on. Ducky wants to talk to us.”
“Are you alright Gibbs? You didn’t get hurt did you?” I ask Gibbs in one breath when we walked away from Tony and Kate towards the elevator.
“I’m fine,” Gibbs answers me.
“Gibbs, I’m worried about you. Are you sure you didn’t get hurt or injured.”
“I’ll be better when we catch this guy. But I’m fine.”
“Please tell me if you are not okay or if you’re hurt. Please. I’m worried about you, you’re the only person who takes to me without me having to follow them to get them to tell them it all.”
“I promise I will,” Gibbs said while pulling me into his arms to show that he is alright while we wait for the elevator and everyone.

“It was quite brilliant actually. I almost missed it. But while I was examining incision, I discovered that the carotid artery showed absolutely no sign of decay. Yes, I once saw a similar case in West Germany were a young boy,” Ducky informed us.

“Duck, we don’t have time for stories on this one,” Gibbs informs him.
“Fine. But first I’d like to ask a question. Do you people find me… boring?”
“No, of course not,” Gibbs Kate and Tony all overlap each other.
“Yes, but after watching Tony and Kate fail at flirting, everything else is boring,” I inform him.
“Can we get back to this now?” Gibbs asks Ducky while hiding the smile at what I said.
“Yes. I then checked the citrous of toxins,” Ducky informs us.
“Vitreous?” Tony asks Ducky.
“Eyeball jelly,” Kate and I say at the same time.
“Very good, Kate. Right as normal, Alice one day I will find something you don’t know like everyone else. The concentrations of methanol confirmed my suspicions. The reason I was unable to determine the cause of death was because our major was alive when they embalmed him,” Ducky informs us.

“The stuff inside Kidwell’s neck was definitely newspaper. I’m still processing the scraps, most of it’s unreadable, but what I do have is in Spanish,” Abby informs us when we get into the lab while she continues to type at her computer.
“Yeah, but look at this,” Abby informs us.
“December Twelfth,” Tony read when Abby enlarged the date on the page.
“That can’t be right. That was two days ago. The funeral was on the,” Kate says but stops looking for the right day.
“Eighth,” Gibbs and I informs them at the same time.
“So how does a guy get into a coffin that was buried four days before he supposedly died?” Tony asks everyone.
“They knew we were going to dig him up,” Kate answers him.
“They killed him and hoped we wouldn’t notice,” Gibbs informs them.
“Well, we did,” I inform him.

“We know Kidwell was murdered,” Kate said while we are all in the squad room waiting for Gibbs to tell us what to do.
“And that lying sack of excrement is somehow involved. What” you prefer I call him a sack of,” Tony says.
“The question now is what happened to Major Peary. Is he still alive?” I ask them while cutting Tony off.
“There’s an easy way to check,” Gibbs informs us while walking into the room.
“What? Do you think Mrs. Peary is just going to give us permission to dig up his grave?” Kate asks him.
“I don’t know, Kate. I wasn’t planning on asking her.”
“Hey, guys,” Abby said while walking in pushing a big machine in front of her.
“Abby, have you tracked this guy down?”
“Not yet, but I’ve only heard back from about half of the embassies.”
“What is this thing, Abby?” Kate asks what we are all thinking.
“Ground penetrating radar. Gibbs didn’t tell you?”
“That is so cool,” I say while looking at the machine.
“Tell us what?” Kate asks Gibbs.
“You’re going grave robbing tonight,” Gibbs answers her.

“This is so not right. I mean, it’s not like we couldn’t have done this during daylight,” Tony says while we walk through the cemetery while shining the torch everyway.
“Are you afraid of Ghosts, Tony?” Kate ask while I latch into her arm in fear.
“No, I’m afraid of getting shot for trespassing. Where the hell is Gibbs?”
“Right here,” Gibbs says while just appearing out of nowhere, making me jump in fright and latch into Kate's arm tighter.

“Don’t do that.”

“Did you calibrate the radar yet?” Gibbs asks while giving me a question look for who jumpy I am.

“Just about. Check this out. Oh, yeah. Look it,” Tony said while looking at the grave next to the one we need.

“What’s that by the feet?” Kate asks while pointing at the monitor at the old lady’s feet.

“I don’t know.”

“Fluffy,” Gibbs read of the head stone.

“Eww!”

“Oh, don’t worry when you die, I while throw every dead animal I can. Just to confuse the people who dig you up,” I inform her.

“That must have been one lonely old lady,” Tony informs us.

“And one pissed off poodle. Okay, bring it over here. Let’s see if Major Perry’s home,” Gibbs said while gently taking me other hand.

“All right. Well, the casket’s metal, boos. I’m getting some false signatures but,” Tony informs us while working to be able to see what is in the casket, “there is definitely something in there and it is not Major Peary,” Tony finished when we see bricks and not a body.

“Tired, Kate?” Gibbs asks when he walks into bullpen after talking to Abby to see Kate yawning. I am sleeping at Gibbs computer where I was trying to write the report on what we found so that at the end of the case we can just sign it and hand it in.

“It’s two am, Gibbs,” Kate said to him in an ‘are you stupid’ tone of voice.

“Better get moving then,” Gibbs said while walking over to his desk and grabbing his gun.

“On what?” Tony asks him.

“I need to know where the newspaper was published that was found in Kidwell.”

“Tonight?” Kate ask him.

“Technically speaking, it’s this morning,” Gibbs said while rubbing my hair and then turning and walking up to MTAC.

“Hey, Alice wake up,” Gibbs said while shaking me.

“Five more minutes please,” I mumble to him while turning my head away.

“Wake up, where leaving.”

“Okay,” I say while getting up but I’m not wake, that point is driven home when I trip over my own feet and fall onto Gibbs. He leads me to the elevator and don’t comment when I lean against him and start to fall asleep again.

Once the elevator reached the floor level, Gibbs gently leads me out with a hand on my back. He helps me into the front of the car and laid the car seat back a bit so I can sleep on the trip to the airplane. He clipped my seatbelt and walks over to the driver seat while Kate and Tony gets into the back.

“I’m like to officially go on record as saying I really, really miss the Gulfstream we took to GITMO. Are you hungry, Kate?” Tony asks Kate while she looks like the life has been sucked out of her, while she gags into a bag.

“Oh,” Kate says to tony before add, “oh, Tony. Do I look hungry to you?”

“Now that you mention it, you kind of look like,” Tony states to say but thunder and banging cuts him off before he can say anything to piss Kate off.

“Tell me that’s normal.”

“Sure,” Tony says when the banging happens again, “Uh, no. That I’m not so sure about.”

“Great. How long ‘till we get to Colombia?”

“Not long. Five, six hours, tops.”

“Is he really sleeping or is that just an act,” Kate asks while nodding her head to Gibbs who is
sleeping across from them. My head is resting on his chest with his arm across my shoulders keeping me close.

“No, he’s really sleeping.”

“How can you tell?”

“He looks peaceful. But is she really sleeping?”

“Yes.”

“How can you tell?”

“She’s not trying to piss me off or drinking coffee.”

“Good morning. Sleep well?” Gibbs asks Kate and Tony when he walks up.

“By ‘well’ you mean violently throwing up all night and bouncing around like rag dolls?” Kate asks him.

“Yeah, boss. We slept very well. Thanks for asking,” Tony adds into the conversation next.

“Aw,” Gibbs says, “you’ll get used to it.”

“That’s what I’m afraid of,” Kate informs him.

“Sir, we’ll be landing in about thirty minutes,” the co-pilot informs Gibbs while handing him a cup of coffee.

“Did you hear back from the embassy yet, Staff sergeant?” Gibbs asks the co-pilot while taking a sip of his coffee. Kate stands up and started looking around for something.

“The marines are expecting you. They won’t let Canton’s partner leave his office until you get there.”

“Okay. My compliments to the pilot,” Gibbs said and once the co-pilot is out of hearing he asks Kate, “What are you looking for, Kate?”

“Oh… the ladies room,” Kate says. “Ok, the men’s room,” Kate changes it to when Tony states to laugh.

“There’s no men’s room.”

“Well then how the hell am I supposed to go to the bathroom?” Kate asks making Gibbs grab a bag from nowhere, “You’re kidding, right? No way. Forget it. I can wait,” Kate says while sitting back down.

“Okay, suit yourself.”

“Gibbs can I have a bottle of water,” I ask Gibbs while sitting up, making Kate give me a look knowing what I am planning.

“Damn it! Where?” Kate asks him while snatching the bag.

“Well, if you want some privacy, probably go down behind those boxes there,” Gibbs tells her while taking another sip of his coffee.

“God I miss Air Force one,” Kate says while walking to where Gibbs said to go.

“I miss coffee,” I call back to her.

“We tracked Canton to an insurgent camp. By the time we got there he was gone,” Gonzales informs us when we get to the field office.

“What do you think about that, Kate? Do you think agent Gonzales here is working for Canton?” Gibbs asks.

“It’s possible. Two million can go a long way in Colombia,” Kate answers him.

“If I was rogue do you think I’d be sitting in this office sweating my ass off, Agent Todd?” Gonzales asks Kate.

“I don’t know. Let me see your ass.”

“Kate, don’t flirt with the suspect. And I thought you were a leg girl, not an ass girl,” I say from beside Gibbs.

“Canton doesn’t even know we’re onto him. He’s probably going to walk into this door tomorrow,” Gonzales informs us.

“Yeah well that’s a good plan, except by then Peary’ll probably already be dead,” Gibbs tells him.

“The newspaper we found on Kidwell was published in Bosa,” Tony informs Gonzales.
“That’s about ten miles from here,” Gonzales informs us.
“How many funeral parlours would you say they have?” I ask him.
“What does that have to do with anything?” Gonzales asks us.
“Humour us,” Gibbs informs us.

“There’s Canton’s car out front. How’d you know?” Gonzales informs us when we get to the funeral parlour.
“Because he embalmed Major Kidwell when he was still alive,” Gibbs informs him.
“His joking, right?”
“Canton told your agency the marines were poisoned two weeks ago,” Tony tells him.
“Yeah, with formaldehyde.”
“Well, if Peary’s body turns up stabbed, shot or beaten, he blows his cover.”
“And then there’s the time of death. He can’t have two day-old bodies. The embalming hides it. The perfect cover up,” Kate continues for him.
“No such thing,” Gibbs and I say at the same time.
“Travelling knew he was a sick bastard, but that’s just,” Gonzales says while looking at the funeral, while Gibbs, Tony and Kate get their guns out and ready. Gibbs hands me a second gun he carries so that I can help, “Hold on, Gibbs. This isn’t the U.S. I’ve got to call the Colombia’s in on this.”
“Well, you do that. Tony take the front door. Kate and I will go around back,” Gibbs informs Gonzales.

“Now I know why everyone in the CIA hate these guys,” Gonzales mumbles while grabbing his gun and follows us to the back.

We all sneak into the back of the funeral home to find the missing marine. Gibbs whistles to get everyone attention and then tells us what to do.
“Get them out of here!” Tony pointed out the funeral goes.
“It’s an emergency! Get out!” Gonzales yells in Spanish while pointing to the door.
“Are you ready?” Gonzales asks when we get into the basement.
“Maybe not,” Tony answers when we hear gunshots down the hallway.
“Grenade,” Gibbs yells while pushing me down onto the ground while covering my body with his. “Are you ok?” Gibbs asks everyone while pulling me onto my feet.
“I think so. Is that my blood?” Kate asks when she see blood on her clothe.
“Gibbs, I know you’re out there. Answer me or I’ll pop this marine,” Canton yells out to us.
“Jack! It’s me! Gonzales! I’m coming in,” Gonzales yells out.

“This doesn’t concern you, Gonzales. I want Gibbs. Unarmed,” Canton yells when Gonzales steps into the doorway. He shoots him without a thought, killing him before he hits the ground. “I said Gibbs. The marine is next.”
“Okay,” Gibbs said before turning to Kate and adding, “Relax your shoulders. I’m coming in.” “Two million dollars. It was all mine. But you wouldn’t let up. You really think I’m going to let you walk out of here?”
“I figured you were going to say that.
“I can’t believe you trusted me.”
“You sound just like my ex-wife,” Gibbs inform him, making me laugh at what he said.

Kate, Tony and I all jump into the door way and shooting Canton without hesitation. He is dead before he hits the ground but the marine is alive but someone shot him in the ear.

“Daddy! It’s daddy! Daddy, I missed you,” Zack yells when Peary steps out of our car.
“Hey! I really missed you,” Major Peary says before turning around and saying to Gibbs, “Thank you. Thank you all so much.”

“Oh god, what happened to your ear?” Lisa asks when he sees his ear.

“I’ll live.

“I’m telling you, that wasn’t my fault, Kate,” Tony said while we walk back to the car.

“Oh, so it was mine?” Kate asks Tony.

“Gibbs saw the whole thing. Let him decide.”

“Fine. Ask him.”

“I will,” Tony said while turning to ask Gibbs only to watch him walk up to a car that stopped and drive away with the red head in it.
Left for Dead

Chapter Notes

Who do you think Alice real Father is?
When do you want to find out?
When do want Alice to have her birthday to turn 18?
And finish high school?

“It’s not very deep,” Ducky said while looking at the grave that Jane Doe was buried.
“Hastily dug graves rarely are,” Gibbs informs Ducky.
“Do you know why graves are six feet deep, Gibbs?”
“I do,” Gibbs and I answer at the same time.
“Six feet is the minimum depth at which the smell of a decomposing corpse cannot attract wild
animals. Of course, there are exceptions. A polar bear can smell.”
“Ducky, I said I knew,” Gibbs tells him.
“Sorry.”
“No tracks. Whoever buried her may have parked on the street and used the hiking trail. The park
rangers circle hourly at night, so he’d have to move pretty fast to be parked on the road,” Tony
informs us.
“Well, that goes with the shallow grave. Our digger was in a hurry. Okay, let’s get to work,” Gibbs
says to Tony.
“I don’t have a body,” Ducky informs us like we don’t already know that.
“Go find one, Duck.”
“Here?”
“Sure. How many times have we had multiple victims?”
“Quite right, Jethro,” Ducky said while walking away.
“That’s slick, boss,” Tony says with a chuckle.
“What’s that?”
“Getting Ducky off so he wouldn’t bug us with one of those stories about,” Tony rambles before
changing to, “We’d better get back to work.”
“Your names Jethro?” I ask Gibbs while giving him a confused look.
“Yeah, got a problem with that,” Gibbs says.
“Sorry,” Tony says.
“How did you two do?”
“I found a couple of arrowheads,” Gibbs tells him.
“Ah! Yeah – this one’s an arrowhead, but this one’s a shark’s tooth. And oh… not more than a few
thousand years old.”
“That recent?” Tony asks.
“Oh yes. Any older and it would be blackened and fossilized.”
“How’d it get into Rock Creek Park?”
“Oh, pre-Colombian Indians – they either found a dead shark on the shore or procured it from a Casimoroid tribe. We have to notify ARPA.”
“After we’re done here,” Gibbs orders him.
“Come on, Gibbs. It’s a two hundred and fifty thousand dollar fine for disturbing an archaeological site.”
“Crime site first, Duck.”
“You know, I was just thinking. Since the arrowhead and shark’s tooth were here before Jane Doe was buried,” Tony asks but at the look that Gibbs is giving him, “Never mind.”
“Wouldn’t it be fascinating if our Jane Doe was unknowingly interred atop a prehistoric burial? It’s happened to me once before you know. In sixty eight.” Ducky rambles, “or was it sixty seven? No matter.”
“Does he ever run out of the endless stories?” I sign to Gibbs, making him give me a small shake of his head telling me no.
“...We found a forty seventy calibre lodged in the Comanche’s femur. Now since the forty seventy cavalry carbine was introduced in eighteen seventy three we have an approximate date to work with,” Ducky continues to ramble while sitting on a tree branch.
“Speaking of dates to work from. We’ve worked together for two years and you know, I have no idea where you live,” Tony cuts in.
“Well, I’d just as well we kept it that way, Tony.”
“Right.”
“Well, hello,” Gibbs said.
“Are you just doing that to shut Tony up?” I ask him while looking over his shoulder.
“Ah, another artefact?” Ducky asks us.
“Only if your Pre-Colombians used keys.”
“I suppose you want me to find out what chastity belt this opens,” Abby asks Gibbs while looking at the key we found.
“Do I look like DiNozzo?” Gibbs asks her in return.
“Well, in the right light, sometimes,” I inform him.
“Not funny, boss. Besides, I could open a chastity belt,” Tony enlightens us.
“Cool, mine is seventeenth century French. But Kate doesn’t let me keep it in the house,” I tell Abby.
“Why not?”
“She is Kate and doesn’t like anything cool, like dead body bits in the fridge.”
“You have a chastity belt?” Tony asks us both.
“So much more information then I need to know about Abby, and not enough about this key,” Gibbs said while giving us all looks.
“The key opens a magnetized lock. Instead of serrations, magnets repel magnetized pin,” Abby informs him.
“Hotel room?”
“Possibly. But it could be any high security lock. There’s no logos or serial numbers. But a magnetic code is like a fingerprint. So it’ll lead me back to whatever system made the code on the key.”
“Hospital called. The rape kit’s negative. Anything on her prints or clothing?” Kate asks Abby.
“Nothing on the fingerprints yet, but the gas chromatograph should be giving me something on her clothe soon.”
“Hey, how was your interview?” Gibbs asks Kate.
“It’s sad, Gibbs. She’s trying so hard. She trying so hard. She desperately want to help,” Kate
answers him.
“I’m glade.” But did she remember anything?” I cut Gibbs off.
“She did. She thinks that she’s been fingerprinted before.”
“Terrorist,” Tony says.
“And she remembers praying in church. She’s not the terrorist type, Tony.”
“That what you said about the press tours on air force one, but look how that ended,” I remind her.
“Oh, so you’re thinking more Emma Thompson than Angelina Jolie?” Tony asks Kate.
“Got a whup!” Abby informs us when the computer beeps.
“What kind of whup, Abby? Abby?” I ask her while trying to look at the computer but she keeps
getting in my way.
“Okay, um... this hit is erythritol. It’s used in low-carb sweeteners. And this spike is trimethulene.
It’s found in polyester fibres. Dinitrate is a common angina medication. And this is glycol, and glycol
is antifreeze.”
“So Jane Doe uses low-carb sweetener, wears polyester, puts her own anti-freeze in her car and has a
heart condition,” Tony asks her.
“Or she’s mixing up a brew to go boom! Big time. All these chemicals are used in high grade
explosives,” I inform him.
“I can’t release a women who doesn’t know her name, Agent Gibbs,” Jane Doe’s doctor, Sanderson,
informs us.
“What’s the neurological consult say?” Gibbs asks him.
“She’s in no medical danger, but she doesn’t know who she is, where she lives, her phone number,
anything! I can’t release her!”
“Yes, you can, Doctor. Tell them, Maureen,” Kate cuts in while leading Jane Doe to us.
“My name’s Maureen Ingalls. I live at six twenty Niagara Street in Alexandria. I don’t think I ever
remembered my phone number,” Jane Doe resights what she knows about herself.
“You remember who buried you?” Gibbs asks her.
“She may always block that memory. Isn’t right, Doctor?” Kate asks for her.
“Yes. Most traumatic amnesiacs never recall the event which triggered the memory loss. In fact, I
have a case where there were three accident victims who,” Sanderson answers Kate but continues to
ramble on.
“What if her attacker return?” Tony overlaps the doctor.
“She’ll be in protective custody at my place,” Kate answers her.
“No, she is not. I am not living with someone I don’t know. That is just asking for trouble,” I cut in
while pointing my finger at Kate.
“So you’ll assume responsibility for signing her out?” Sanderson asks Kate.
“Of course,” is Kate’s answer without thinking about it.
“I still suggest she stays for another twenty four hours, but since she’s recovered her memory, I,”
Sanderson informs us.
“Thank you, doctor. Oh, and Ms Ingalls has no clothes. So can she borrow a set of greens?”
“No problem. Follow me, please.”
“I’ll join you in a minute,” Kate said to Jane Doe, giving Jane Doe the signal to follow the doctor.
“Okay, who’s Maureen Ingalls?” Gibbs asks Kate.
“How do you know she isn’t?” Kate asks him.
“Our cousin,” I cut before she lies about Jane Does identity.
“That was a quick fold,” Tony said while looking at me.
“Kate, do you realized the laws you’re violating by signing her out when you know she’s lying?”
Gibbs asks her.
“Her memory is already coming back, Gibbs. She remembered the German word for ‘explosive
fabricator,’” Kate informs us.
“She speaks German?” Tony asks her in surprise.
“No, but I think she makes explosives for a German firm here.”
“Or a German terrorist cell with ties to Al Qaeda,” I tell her.
“Well, since Al Qaeda is not listed in the yellow pages, let’s start checking German munition makers first.”
“Whoa. What’s with you and Jane Doe?” Tonky asks her.
“And please tell me it is not genic,” I add onto the end.
“She’ll be occupying my spare bedroom so I don’t have to stay no to you,” Kate informs him while giving me a shove for what I said.
“Oh, did I ask? Did I?” Tony asks us.
“Why are you doing this, Kate” Gibbs asks her while grabbing my arms to stop me falling over.
“She’s terrified, Gibbs. I should think my place would be more conducive to her recovering her memory than a hospital. And we need to find that bomb,” Kate informs him.
“Gotcha,” Abby says while looking at her computer.
“Love to hear that word out of your dark lips, Abby,” Gibbs informs her while giving her caf-pow.
“Hey guys. What did you find?”
“Kate willing to give her bedroom to Jane Doe and not me,” Tony informs him.
“Shocking,” Abby and I say at the same time.
“You were right, Gibbs. I matched the magnetic code to a system made by MagSecure. It’s a hotel key,” Abby informs him.
“You got a list of the hotels?”
“MagSecure’s faxing it over. It’ll be here shortly.”
“What’s that on the top?” Tony asks her.
“A scratch.”
“Mm, that’s more than a scratch.”
“You might actually be right.”
“Want to know what my vision is?”
“No,” Gibbs answers him.
“Hell no. Why would someone what to know that?” I asks him.
“Twenty ten. Same as Ted Williams. He could see the seams on a fastball coming at him,” Tony tells us anyway.
“How about knuckles?” Gibbs and I asks at the same time.
“Whoa,” Abby said when her computer beeps.
“Whoa. How did someone etch letters that small?” Gibbs asks while looking over Abby’s shoulder onto the computer screen.
“Micro-laser. It was developed to put serial number on diamonds. The numbers are invisible to the naked eye,” Abby explains.
“Not mine,” Tony brags.
“So the thieves think their heist is fence-able and then wham-they get five to ten,” Abby continues to explain after we all give Tony a look.
“Why use them on a room key?” Gibbs asks Abby.
“Maybe because someone was playing with the hotel’s new toy. Like when photocopiers first come out and people were copying everything from C-notes to their ass,” I inform Gibbs.
“You sat your naked butt on a photocopier, didn’t you, Abby and Alice,” Tony asks us.
“Yep,” Abby answers with a smile.
“Who didn’t? I bet even Gibbs did,” I say while looking to Gibbs to see if he answers one way or another.
“Why are you here and not with Kate and Jane Doe?”
“I refuse to stay in a house with someone I don’t know. Which is why I have never been on a school camp.”
“Cool.”
“Abby, when you have time, can you maybe help me find my biological father?” I sign to Abby so Tony won’t know what I ask her.

“Of course I can. I just need a DNA sample and I can run it until I found out who it is,” Abby signs back to me.

“It looks like they’re only three hotels in the D.C. area that use MagSecure keys,” Abby tells us when we follow her into the back office of the lab.

“And the phone number for the Jackson is five, five, five,” Tony reads off for Gibbs.

“Triple five zero one hundred,” Gibbs overlaps him without looking at the sheet of paper.

“Do you got contact lenses?”

“Why are you so concerned with Gibbs age and sight? I think you really want to have sex with him,” I tell Tony.

“Nope,” Gibbs answers him while giving me a look of thanks before saying into the phone, “Can I talk to your manager, please?”

“Laser surgery?” Tony asks while giving me an annoyed look for my comment.

“No. DiNozzo, put a sock in it. Contact the rest of these hotels,” Gibbs ordered him, before turning back to the phone again and saying, “Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. Navy Criminal Investigative Service.”

“None of the hotels micro-etch their keys,” Tony informs us once he is finished talking to the hotels.

“Well, somebody etched ‘the apartment’ on that key,” Abby informs him again.

“Maybe as permanent resident. What hotels besides the Jackson take permanent residents?” Gibbs asks Tony.

“Neither of them,” Tony answers him.

“We’ll need a search authorization.”

“How’d you know that Jackson had permanent residents?”

“I just did.”

“Did you used to live there once, Boss? Or…”

“No.”

“Did you know someone who lives there…”

“My ex-wife lives there.”

“Oh. Oh. So you didn’t read the phone number, you knew it,” Tony said with surprise while looking at Gibbs.

“Very expensive-looking, boss. I hope she’s not sticking you with the,” Tony says to Gibbs while looking around the corridor of the hotel room.

“Has Mister Richter had a suite here for long?” Gibbs overlaps him.

“Over two years,” the manager answers him.

“Then you know him well?”

“Well, not really. If the residents don’t call us with a problem, we respect their privacy. Here we are, suite eighty seven hundred. Oh, my,” the manager said while leading us into Mister Richter’s room and seeing it is trashed and there is a dead body init.

“Okay. Did she give you a name?” Gibbs asks Kate into his hone while we process the crime scene.

“Blue blazer, blue shirt, burgundy tie with a blue strip? Oh, yeah. We found him.”

“Boss, Alice, this is Detective Andy Kochifis, Homicide 0 cut me some slack on the Major Kerry investigation,” Tony informs us when we come over to them.

“Maybe he’ll do it again,” Gibbs says while taking a sip of his coffee that I went and got him.

“What? I do it once and I’m a whore?” Kochifis asks us.

“Nope, but if you do it twice, hell yes,” I informed him.

“A courtesan, maybe. Richter had a year’s lease, it’s not the home address of his driver’s license,” Gibbs informs us.

“There’s no clothe in the closet. No photos. Just hotel amenities,” I informs Gibbs what I have found.
“Check the booze.”
“Could be a beltway bandit who leased this suite for company entertainment,” Kochifis inputs into the conversation.
“In his own name?” Gibbs asks him.
“Tony said an amnesia case led you here.”
“Yeah, found a key to this place in Jane Doe’s grave.”
“I thought she was alive.”
“Yeah, she woke up taking a dirt nap in Rock Park and did a Dracula,” Tony informs him.
“That’s a new one.”
“Whoever buried her thinks she’s dead. I’d like to keep it that way,” Gibbs informs him.
“Okay. But why do you want the lead on the investigation?”
“There may be a Navy terrorist attack in the mix. We’d just like to keep it all in one ball of wax.”
“Yeah, look how well we did last time, huh,” Tony says.
“Not according to,” Kochifis cuts him off.
“To the TV, yeah, I know, don’t rub it in,” Tony cuts him off.
“All right, look. If our M.E.’s cool, so am I.”
“NCIS will handle the autopsy,” Kochifis’ ME tells us while walking past us.
“Okay, Aldridge,” Kochifis say to him.
“What’d he die from, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky while standing over him and the body.
“A Blunt object to the back of the head. Yes, I believe we’ll find blood in hair. Well, blood on an object here. One of the bookends, the obelisk. The crystal ashtray. I hope he didn’t suffer the indignity of being whacked by this tawdry bust of President Kennedy,” Ducky informs us.
“Tony.”
“I’m on it,” Tony said while looking at the busted.
“Was he murdered before our Jane Doe was buried?”
“Liver temperature was close to room temperature. So he deceased at least eighteen hours ago,” Ducky answers him without answering him.
“You didn’t answer my question.”
“Jethro, I didn’t answer forensic questions I don’t know the answers to. You know that. Why do you keep asking me?”
“Force of habit,” Gibbs said with a smile and shrug of his shoulder.
“Bad news, Ducky. It looks like blood on the Kennedy bust,” Tony informs Ducky while bagging and tagging it.
“Oh, you poor man!” Ducky says to the dead body.
“Guys, this is weird,” Abby informs us while almost jumping on the spot.
“Ducky didn’t like it either. Said it was tawdry,” Tony informs her.
“Oh, no, no. The bust is cool. It’s what I found that’s weird. There’s a partial palm print on this bust of Kennedy. And if you remember your history,” Abby informs us.
“There was a partial palm print on the Mannilicher rifle used to assassinate Kennedy,” I cut Abby off and finish what she was saying.
“Don’t tell me that you tried to match them?” Tony asks Abby.
“Please tell me that you did.”
“No, there’s not enough of a print there to match. But I just thought it’d be cool to try,” Abby informs us.
“Are you saying that our palm print may be useless for identification?” Gibbs questions Abby.
“Yes. But don’t you think that’s weird? That the Kennedy bust and the Kennedy murder weapon both have partial palm prints.”
“That’s not what I think is weird, Ab. What is weird is that Alice knows that. What about the latents you found at the hotel room?” Gibbs asks her.
“Um… there were some unknowns and some matches. The ones on the crystal tumbler and the Macallan belong to the victim. But what’s going to make your day is the latent you lifted off the desk. The one on the left side Kate took off Jane Doe in the hospital. On the right side… is your print from the desk.”

“Oh, they match,” Tony works out what Abby is saying without saying it.

“Fourteen Galton points.”

“Jane Doe was in that hotel suite,” Gibbs exclaims.

“Our victim died from a subdural hematoma caused by a skull fracture. I believe we’ll find that this impression in the parietal lobe will match that on the gaudy bust of President Kennedy,” Ducky informs us when we get into autopsy after talking to Abby.

“Got time of death yet?” Gibbs asks him.

“Well, due to the fixed lividity, the degree of putrefaction, the level of Escherichia coli in the stomach and digestive tract,” Ducky rambles on like normal.

“Ducky!”

“At least forty four hours ago. That’s the best I can do with any certainly.”

“Our Jane Doe was found at zero three fifty, Monday. Less than two days ago.”

“It’s safe to say our guest didn’t put her in the ground.”

“None of this is getting us to a bomb on a ship, Duck.”

“Ah, but it is, boss. Background on Richter. He was head of Security for a German firm. B-B-B. What is with the Germans and the alphabet thing? B-M-W, B-M-G, B-A-S-F. Any they’re all B’s,” Tony tells us.

“I’m resisting the urge to say cut the B.S.” Gibbs tells him making me laugh at that line.

“B-F-F stands for Bombe Fermentdeckung Fabrik.”

“Tell me that bombe means the same in German as it does in English.”

“Jawohl mein Kapitan,” Tony says in German, “B-F-F makes bomb detecting devices for the U.S. Navy.”

“Yeah.”

“In a hotel?” Brauer asks us, he has a strong German accent. While we are sit and talk in his office.


“Mein Gott,” Brauer informs us in German before continues in English, “Suite eighty seven hundred? I was there Friday.”

“What were you doing at the Jackson Friday?” Tony asks him.

“To kill Richter?” Tony asks him.

“Why is the room lease in Richter’s name?” Gibbs asks him.

“Ours is a very competitive business. We don’t want our arrivals knowing where our firm puts our people. Maids have been bribed. Phones bugged.”

“People murdered,” Tony and I add onto the end.

“That’s a first for us.”

“It may not be the last,” Gibbs informs him.

“Who’s your explosive hersteller?” Tony asks him.

“Suzanne McNeil. Is she dead, too?” Brauer asks us without much sadness.

“What kind of work does she do for you?” I ask him.
“She formulates explosives for our testing aids. Please tell me Suzanne is not dead.”
“Suzanne is not dead,” Tony and I say at the same time, making Brauer stop typing in surprise.
“Whoops,” Gibbs said.
“Big Whoops,” Tony agrees.
“You looked of surprised to find out she is alive, Brauer.”
“Yeah. You tell me Walter has been murdered. You say he may not be the only one. Then you ask me about Suzanne. Of course I assume that she is dead, too,” Brauer informs us like that is an okay reason to think someone is dead. The computer beeps indicating that computer has got what he was looking for, he turns the computer around to us while saying, “This is Suzanne McNeil.”
“Why do you keep calling her by her first name? Are you having an affair?” I ask him.

“Her name’s Suzanne McNeil,” Gibbs informs Kate when she rings him to inform him how she is going with Jane Doe. “She formulates explosives for B.F.F. I’ve e-mail her personal file to you. She’s got a top security clearance. It’ll be like telling her life story. She didn’t recognize Richter?” she got all teary eyed over a body she didn’t know? Oh, yeah. So you keep telling me. Maybe. He knows she’s alive. He’s not in cuffs. He probably thinks she’s unconscious or too traumatized to remember. Oh, right. I’ve got a couple of ideas,” Gibbs says before hanging up the phone.

“You e-mailed her?” I ask him while sucking on the lolly pop I pulled out of my pocket.

“I don’t know how to e-mail.”

“Well, don’t take created for my hard work of not teasing Kate through an email.”

“I’ll be with you in a moment,” Brauer yells out to us again.

“DiNozzo,” Gibbs says when Tony walks over to us after he finished talking to the women.

“Sorry, boss. This guy’s Webster’s definition of a micro-manager. People need his permission to take a whiz,” Tony informs us like it makes it better that we are still waiting.

“I could have gone for coffee. What’d you pick up? Anything?”

“No. Give me a few minutes with his girl and,” Tony starts to say but Gibbs hits him in the back of the head, shutting him up instantly. “From the little English I heard, the new ‘Bombe Sniffler’ isn’t snuffing so good. Brauer’s worried it won’t pass Navy acceptance trials Thursday.”

“Test? On a Navy ship?” I asks Tony.

“If I heard there were going to be tests on a Navy ship, do you think we’d still be standing here, boss?”

“Oh, sorry. Forgot your mind works concurrently. Where is this taking place?” Gibbs asks him.

“In some lab here.”

“I apologize for the delay, Agent Gibbs. What would you like to see first?” Brauer asks us when he finally comes over.

“The lab where you’re conducting the Navy Test on Thursday,” Gibbs orders him.

“Why do you want to go there?”

“Because it gets him hard,” I answers him sarcastically.

“Your Security of Security is dead. NCIS is tasked with protecting Navy brass,” Gibbs tells him while discreetly smacking my ass for that comment.

“You think terrorists killed him?” Brauer asks him.

“These days I look for terrorists behind most everything.”

“Of course. Ja. This way, please.”

“How well did you know Suzanne McNeil?” Gibbs asks Brauer while we walk throw a building in single file.

“Oh, didn’t she tell you?” Brauer asks us in surprise.

“I’d like your opinion on her relationship.”

“Well, I know Suzanne quite well professionally. She is one of my key employees.”

“Kind of sexy, too,” Tony adds into the conversation what he thinks about Jane Doe.

“Oh, I think you find all women that way, Agent DiNozzo.”

“Oh, come on. You’ve got to admit she’s pretty sexy.”
“I’m happily married.”
“Yeah?”
“Do you have micro-etching equipment here?” Gibbs asks while changing the topic.
“Yeah. Richter uses,” Brauer says before rethinking it and changes it to, “Used it for security purposes.”
“Did you ever see this old film ‘the Apartment’ with Jack Lemmon?”
“No, I don’t believe so.”
“Richter did,” Tony informs him.
“Probably. He loved those movies. But what does this have to do with…”
“I assume the photo in your office is your wife,” Gibbs cuts him off.
“Ja,” Brauer answers in German.
“Lovely women,” I state.
“Dahnke,” Brauer says again in German.
“Older than Suzanne, of course,” Tony adds in.
“Are you implying that I had an affair with Ms. McNeil?”
“I said that in your office before you made us wait like an hour for this tour,” I remind him.
“Did you?” Gibbs asks once I’m done talking.
“No, Agent Gibbs, I did not. A man in my position cannot afford to risk losing everything in one of your ridiculous sexual harassment suits,” Brauer informs us.
“‘There is a motive.’
“Sure is,” Tony adds in so no one forgets he is there.
“Yeah, I suppose someone in your profession would look at it that way. But why would I murder Walter Richter who wasn’t only a close associate, but my friend?” Brauer tells us.
“I don’t know,” Gibbs says to him.
“I wouldn’t,” Brauer informs us while hitting a boor buzzer and then opens the door into the test facility.
“Who are these people, Stephen?” Rutger ask in German.
“It’s okay,” Brauer answers him in German.
“Is that a bomb sniffer?” Tony ask.
“We don’t breed dogs. It’s a Fernschaltung Sprengstoff Spuren Einheitour,” Brauer informs us in an insulted tone of voice.
“It’ll never take first in show at Westminster.”
“Where is that ship?” Gibbs asks while nodes to the Navy ship on a monitor.
“In here, Agent Gibbs,” Brauer answers while opening another door. We walk throw the door into another corridor.
“Is this where you use the explosive Suzanne makes?” I ask him.
“Ja. She makes exotic bombs to test our detecting devices.”
“Chemical signatures we are detecting. Nitrates, mercury, glycols, cyclotrimethylenes. Object Four B contains a compound of cyclonite and penaerythrite tetranitate,” Rutger informs us what we are looking at while controlling the bomb finding robot.
“Terrorist grade Semtex,” Brauer informs us.
“Our NCIS explosive sniffer would tag that,” Tony enlightens him.
“Then why are you worried about the Navy trails?”
“Is that what Suzanne said?”
“Why are you so afraid of what she might or might not have told us?” I ask them all while watching the robot move onscreen.
“She would be pleased to see us fail,” Rutger says without anyone answering my question.
“Why?” Gibbs and I ask them.
“She would win, of course. And Suzanne likes to win.”
“It’s her job to create explosives we cannot detect,” Brauer explains to us.
“So she held a few surprises back because she like to win,” Gibbs expresses.
“In the beginning she had some limited successes, but Doctor Rutger has re-written the software to,” Brauer explains at the bomb exploded taking out the camera on the sniffer robot.
“I had a hunting dog like that once.”
“How did that go?” I ask Gibbs while smiling at the through of Gibbs hunting dog.
“Hey. Well?” Gibbs ask when we get back into the main part of the building and see Kate standing there alone.
“Reading her file didn’t work. She thought being up in her office might help her remember,” Kate enlightens him.
“How’d she know where her office was?” Tony inquires her in confusion.
“It’s called a directory, Tony.”
“Are you speaking of Ms McNeil?” Brauer questions of us.
“Yeah, we are. Kate Todd, B-F-F CEO Stephen Brauer,” Gibbs introduces them.
“Mister Brauer,” Kate says.
“What doesn’t she remember?”
“Well, why don’t you ask her yourself?” I ask him while pointing to Suzanne aka Jane Doe.
“Anything?” Kate asks Suzanne.
“No,” Suzanne answers her without any emotion.
“Suzanne?” Brauer asks.
“We know each other?”
“I’m sorry, Mister Stephen. I… I don’t remember you.”
“Brauer. Stephen is my given name.”
“Sorry, Mister Brauer.”
“Well, that’s both good news and bad news. She can’t tell you the formula to her explosive,” Gibbs expresses.
“But then again, she can’t remember who buried her Rock Creek Park,” I continue for him.
“Were you buried?” Brauer queries Suzanne like we would like to him about that.
“Yes,” Suzanne replies to him.
“And you don’t remember anything?”
“Only that I like blueberries.”
“Come Suzanne. Sit with me. Perhaps if we talk,” Brauer declares while he and Suzanne walks away from us.
“That son of a bitch is guilty as hell,” Gibbs enlightens us.
“You remember when I stayed with you that time, when it didn’t go so well?” Tony asks Gibbs while we watch Brauer and Suzanne talk out the end of the hallway.
“Yeah I remember, DiNozzo.”
“Well, listen. I was young then. Immature. A little unfocused.”
“That was six months ago, Tony,” Gibbs states making me lose it with laughter.
“She said someone bashed the poor man’s head in. how did she know that Richter’s head was bashed in? I couldn’t see his wound. Nobody told her how he died. She remembered,” Kate realised.
“Suzanne! Don’t!”
“Sorry, Kate,” Suzanne said before dropping the bomb in her hand. We turn and hit the ground, somehow Gibbs body end up half covering my at the explosion lights up the whole room.
“Kate you did the best you can,” I tell Kate while the Ambulance officer look over us and wrap her arm.
“I know but I should have released earlier,” Kate tells me.
“What would you have done if you had? What could you do?”
“I don’t know. Something, anything.”
“Come on Kate lets go home and forget about it while you help me get ready for my date.”

“There you go,” Kate said while pulling my hair into a half up with coils in my hair. My makeup is done to perfection with my blood red lipstick and over the top eye shadow. I am wearing a blood red dress that end just below my bottom and my six inch heels that match my dress.
“Thank you Kate. I’ll see you late and don’t beat yourself up. I got you a bottle of wine to help you feel better,” I tell Kate while grabbing my purse and head out of the apartment.

“Is that a boat?” I ask Gibbs when I get to his place.
“Yes, I thought you had a date tonight,” Gibbs said to me while looking at me standing on the top of his stairs.
“I did.”
“Why are you here and not at the date?”
“I waited for two hours and then when he finally showed up it was my fault that he was late because I didn’t remind him. And all he talks about is himself.”
“Why are you here?”
“I didn’t want to go and tell Kate she was right about John.”
“What did she say?”
“That he was no good and after the same thing as Tony.”
“I’m sorry. Do you want to help me?”
“I don’t know how.”
“Come down here and I while show you,” Gibbs tells me and I walk down the stairs and stop beside Gibbs but he pulls me in front of him and guides my hand to sand the wood.
“Can I ask you question Gibbs?” I asks Gibbs after a few minutes of him just guiding me to sand.
“What is it?”
“How do you get the wood into here?”
“The same way I get the boat at when it is finished.”
“Good morning, Kate, Alice,” Tony mumbles around a mouthful of food.
“I assume that was good morning,” Kate asks to him with a quick glance up from her computer.
“Want one?” Tony asks while offering Kate a doughnut.
“No, thanks.”
“Really good.”
“Can I have one,” I ask Tony while getting up from Gibbs desk and walk over and take one of Tony doughnuts to eat.
“Not worth the price. I like keeping my belt notched exactly where it is,” Kate informs him.
“While we are talking about belts, you owe me a new belt,” I remind Kate and Tony.
“What’s that supposed to mean?” Tony probes her.
“What mean?” Kate asks while pushing her eyebrows together.
“The whole sort of raised eyebrows winky thing.”
“Nothing, really. Just a… a nervous tic.”
“I’ve weighed exactly the same since the day I graduated from college. Never up, never down.”
“Certainly you would know. Do you weigh yourself a lot?”
“I never weigh myself.”
“I see. Huh. I don’t pay that close attention to your body, Tony.”
“Really?”
“But Tony, if you’re happy with the way you are, that’s all that counts.”
“Gibbs, Mm-hmm,” Gibbs said into his phone when it rings as he walks into the office. “We’ve got a murder at little Creek. Get Ducky,” Gibbs says as he gets his gear and walks away.
“Are you alright?” Kate asks Tony while getting her gear and walking away. When no-one is looking Tony tightens his belt.
“Couldn’t be better,” Tony asks her.

Who found the body?” Gibbs asks when we get to the beach with the body on it.
“Victim been ID’d?”
“Yes, sir. Lieutenant Commander Thomas Egan. His wallet was found in the S-U-V.”
“Kate, photos.”
“Got it,” Kate tells him while grabbing the camera and doing it.
“Tag Heuer. You don’t leave one of those around if you’re robbing a guy,” Tony says while looking at the tag Heuer.
“You know the Lieutenant Commander assignment?” Gibbs asks Roe.
“Yes, sir. He’s attached as a technical advisor to side-scan, a civilian contractor on the base. Don’t know any more. Their work’s classified,” Roe enlightens us.
“Keep this under wraps, Master Chief.”
“Yes, sir,” Roe said as the waves start to come close to the crim scene.
“We have a rising tide,” Ducky enlightens us what we already now.
“Okay! DiNozzo?” Gibbs calls out.
“Yo!” DiNozzo says to him.
“You and me take measurements. We’ll rebuild them later in the lab. Kate, more photos,” Gibbs yells out.
“Gotcha,” Kate says to him.
“Gerald, take notes.”
“I’ll do it. Gerald help ducky,” I cut in while grabbing the notebook in the middle of Gibbs and Gerald.
“Come on, move it!”
“We’ve got to keep him dry,” Ducky tells us.
“I’ve got the sign,” Gibbs tells me.
“I’ve got the farthest boulder,” Tony adds in.
“Head and feet!”
“Fifteen point seven one.”
“Eleven point three seven meters.”
“Fifteen point seven one. Eleven point three six. Got them.”
“His dive knife is missing,” Kate informs us while taking a photo of the missing knife holder.
“Yeah, you don’t see this coming, did you, my friend?” Ducky asks the victim.
“Hey, watch out! Tide,” Gibbs yells as a big wave come towards the body. Tony and I jump down between the body and wave getting covered in the ice cold water.
“Well done, Tony, Alice,” Ducky says with a chuckle at the face Tony pulls.
“Bag him,” Gibbs orders.
“I’ve got a spare suit in the van.”
“Are you okay? What is it?” Kate asks Tony.
“Shrinkage,” Gibbs enlightens us making Kate and I laugh.
“I just can’t believe Tom Egan is dead,” Tyler tells us when we get to the building. After I change out of my wet clothe and into one of Gibbs shirts and a pair of Ducky’s pants. I am also wearing a pair of random shoes out of the van.
“When did you see him last?” Gibbs asks him.
“Early this morning,” Overmeyer notifies us.
“Where was the Commander going?”
“To conduct underwater tests on a piece of equipment,” Tyler enlightens us.
“Did you find a device with his body?” Overmeyer asks us.
“What kind of a device?” Kate queries him.
“It’s a handheld sonar gun. I’ve got a wooden mock-up of the prototype that we’re missing. It uses sound echoes to create visual images.”
“Like a sonogram?” I father query him.
“Yeah.”
“Not dissimilar. Earlier types are larger, have to be towed behind water craft,” Tyler conveys to us.
“And ours version can be carried by a diver. My company developed the concept; we brought it to the Navy. Commander Tyler was assigned as my liaison.”
“I brought in Tom. He was a sound-surveillance expert. We were evaluating it.”
“For use in harbor surveillance,” Gibbs tests him.
“Yes, it’s the only working prototype that we have. Its loss is just devastating to the military,” Overmeyer advises us.
“And I bet to your company. Where’s the commander’s desk?”
“There,” Tyler points to a desk that looks like all the other desks.
“We’re seizing his computer, and anything else we find we need. You understand.”
“Egan and his wife have been married for nine years. They met when they were stationed in San Diego,” Kate reads off her PDA while Gibbs hit the brakes in front of the victim’s house.
“Any kids?” Gibbs asks her.
“No. oh, my god! It’s their anniversary next week. It looks like Navy was pretty good about stationing them at the same base.”
“How long have they been here in Little Creek?” I ask Kate next.
“Egan was transferred here in March and his wife had to finish assignment in Panama City, Florida. Then followed four months later.”
“No matter how many times do this, it never gets any easier,” Gibbs informs us while we get out of the car and walk to the front door.
“We should have had DiNozzo handle this interview,” Kate says as I push the doorbell making it chime, Gibbs and I give her a look that says she is stupid, “Just kidding.
“Lieutenant Egan? NCIS,” Gibbs says while flashing his bag at her when she opens the door.
“I’m aware there’s probably a better time to be doing all this,” Gibbs tells the victim’s wife when she leads us to the living room.
“Where were you coming home from, Lieutenant?” Kate asks the wife.
“Camp Lejeune for the weekend. It was a human resources seminar. When I got home the Base Commander and the Chaplain were here and I knew,” Egan tells us.
“When was the last time you spoke to your husband?” I ask the victim while sitting in the chair next to Gibbs.
“Last night.”
“What time?” Gibbs asks her next.
“I don’t know,” Egan sobs out to us.
“Yeah, but if you could try to remember,” I probe her.
“I don’t know,” Egan cries making me feel sorry for her. I get up and walk over to the victim’s wife and gently pull her into a hug to make her stop crying.
“Lieutenant, I know this is hard,” Gibbs tells her while picking up the notebook I put down and continues to write wait is being said.
“Sorry! Around ten,” Egan says while crying, “Before I went to bed.”
“Did you know that he was going diving today?” Kate enquires of her.
“No. But he went diving many times during the week. He was a SEAL. He was decorated.”
“Did he tell you what he was working on?” Gibbs asks her while I move away from her know that she is not crying anymore.
“No, Tom was very strict about need-to-know. He didn’t discuss his work with anyone. Not even me.”
“What do you think, Kate? Alice? Espionage?” Gibbs asks while closing the door of the truck when we get to the base dock.
“A Navy specialist is murdered and the classified device he has with him is missing. It looks that way,” Kate aliased what we know so far.
“Yeah.”
“Oh, my god,” Kate says when she sees Tony walking towards us.
“Don’t even, okay?” Tony tells her before someone can say anything.
“Did I say anything?”
“You were. I know you were.”
“It’s a touch small, but other than that it’s fine. And the bonus, no belt.”
“I like my belt. I miss my belt. You still owe me a new belt,” I inform them again.
“DiNozzo. The anonymous tip?” Gibbs asks Tony while giving me a look for still going on about my belt.
“It came from a restricted phone. Area code seven zero three,” Tony reads of his notepad.
“Langley, Virginia,” Kate released.
“CIA,” Gibbs tells her.
“Wow, huh?” Tony says in surprise.
“Yeah.”
“It’s okay. I got it, Tony. Don’t you worry. Wouldn’t want to disturb your lunch,” Kate alleged to Tony.

“You got me thinking, Kate. Maybe I should improve my diet,” Tony tells Kate while waving a nutrition bar in her face.

“When are you going to start?”

“What do you call this?”

“Bad things masquerading as something good for you?”

“This is a nutrition bar. It says so on the label.”

“Did you read the label? The little one with the ingredients not just the big one with the pretty colours?”

“Oh, sarcasm is so not healthy, Kate.”

“Neither is that. Let’s see,” Kate said while snatching the bar off of Tony and saying, “we’ve got here,” then she reads, “high fructose corn syrup - basically sugar; uh… high maltose corn syrup – another sugar; sugar – sugar; fractionated palm kernel oil. That sounds yummy! And contains less than two percent natural flavour. That would make it ninety eight percent artificial flavour.”

“What are you saying?” Tony ask while Kate drops his food into the bin next to her desk.

“So I hear Egan’s computer is waiting to get up close and personal with me,” Abby says while bouncing into the bullpen.

“Be gentle. I’m sure Tony will be more than happy to lug this downstairs for you. He’s feeling healthy today,” I informs Abby from my place behind Gibbs computer where I am writing the report on what we found so far.

“No problem,” Tony says while grabbing the box of computers.

“Thanks, Tony. Where’s Gibbs?” Abby asks us while looking around the room.

“With Director Morrow. He’s trying to get a meeting with the CIA,” Kate informs Abby.

“Ooh. Why?”

“That’s where the anonymous phone call came from.”

“Langley is like two hundred miles from little creek. Doesn’t make any sense.”

“Especially considering Ducky established time of death as approximately nine thirty. And the tip was phoned in at nine thirty two,” Tony updates Abby on what we know so far.

“It’s impossible.”

“It isn’t if someone from the CIA was watching on a high-def. satellite,” Gibbs tells her while walking down the stars making everyone jump in surprise.

“You’re accusing the Agency of spying on a U.S. Naval Station,” Rober accuses Gibbs when we start talking in Rober’s office at the CIA.

“No problem,” Tony says while grabbing the box of computers.

“Thanks, Tony. Where’s Gibbs?” Abby asks us while looking around the room.

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“Right. You never do anything illegal? We have the same Uncle writing our pay checks. We do what we do to get the job done,” Gibbs apprises him.

“I appreciate the sentiment, Agent Gibbs.”

“We don’t have the need-to-know to know why you have a satellite pointed at little creek. We have a murder to solve. I could use your help,” I advise him.

“Hey, ab,” Gibbs says to her.
“Gibbs, how did we do with the moles?”
“Spooks, Abby. Spooks,” I correct her.
“I can never get that straight.”
“Are you still in touch with the old NASA boyfriend?” Gibbs asks her.
“How many old boyfriends help you at work Abby? And why does Gibbs always know them?” I ask Abby before she can answer Gibbs.
“He wasn’t a boyfriend,” Abby corrects him, “He was a boy-toy. And yeas, w I-M almost every day.”
“You do?” Gibbs asks her.
“Oh yeah.”
“That’s good, right?” I inquire of her.
“It’s very good. Why?”
“Greeting from NASA, NCIS,” Ashton Kugel says when we call him in MTAC, he is a bit of a chunky man but seems like a kind man.
“Whoa, Aston, that was so Star Trak,” Abby says to him.
“Sorry I’m late. I had a cluster of frozen reactor coolant heading for the flight path of an Atlas lift-off. I had to delay the launch. They were not happy about it. I am, however, very happy to see you, Abby, and to help your NCIS crime-fighting colleagues.”
“Ah, you’re the best, Ashton!”
“Oh, you are, Ab.”
“Thank you.”
“Special Agent Gibbs here,” Gibbs cuts into the conversation while stepping out of the shadows with me.
“Of course,” Ashton Kugel declares to Gibbs.
“We appreciate your help. We’re looking for SAT activity yesterday about zero nine thirty Eastern Standard,” I express to him.
“Roger that. Geostationary?”
“Asynchronous,” Abby tells him with a grin while he types everything into his computer trying to get what we want to know.
“Multi-positional.”
“Very.”
“Do you understand what they are saying? Because I don’t and I don’t like not knowing,” I whisper in Gibbs hear.
“Land stat seven?” Ashton Kugel asks Abby without noticing I even said anything.
“Think CIA,” Abby orders him with a smile still.
“Ah, K-H-twelve.”
“Improved crystals.”
“Thermal infrared.”
“It gets hot down here.”
“Target area?”
“Virginia Coast.”
“We have entry.”
“Oh, you’re so good, Ashton.”
“Any idea what department it came from?” Gibbs cuts in while signing no to me.
“Oh, pretty sophisticated blocking system on the K-H-twelve. I’m afraid that task is a bit more complicated. Complicated, but not impossible. They overlooked the same technology on the Milstar satellite relays and,” Ashton Kugel rambles without stopping in the typing he is doing, “That particular satellite is controlled from building thirty-five-C, office four-oh-nine.”
“Bravo, Ashton,” Abby exclaims as the call is ended.
“We’re lucky Abby could get in the system and pull his name off the office number. There’s not
much on him,” Kate tells us while looking over the nerd’s file. We are sitting in a NCIS sedan waiting for the nerd to get home for the night.
“CIA’s not big on bios,” Gibbs informs Kate as my phone gets another message, making Gibbs look back at me in the mirror.
“Jeremy Wirth… twenty three… current address, thirty-five B Maple, Georgetown. Graduated M-I-T at twenty,” Kate reads out to us while I check who is texting me, when I see who it is, I turn the screen off without responding to who it is.
“I’m impressed.”
“Been with the Agency six months… working as a satellite analyst. That’s all we got.”
“Why would they use someone so green on such a covert assignment?”
“Too bad we don’t have a photo.”
“Don’t need one. He’ll fit the profile.”
“I think geeky, right?”
“Well yeah, Kate, something like that,” Gibbs and I say at the same time with the same leave of sarcasm in our voice, but after we finish talking Gibbs takes a drink of coffee.
“Ha! Have you ever seen Robert Redford in Three Days of the condor?”
“Yes,” Gibbs answers her.
“That’s a geek I could get covert with.”
“Kate, I would not get my hopes up,” I tell her.
“Check it out,” Gibbs tells us with a chuckle while nodding to a person walking not far in front of us.
We get out of the car and walk up to the person.
“Jeremy?” Kate asks him making him turning around to see her but not seeing Gibbs and me slipping behind him.
“D I know you?” Jeremy asks her.
“My name’s Kate. Kate Todd. NCIS. Can I talk to you?” Kate says while showing him her badge.
“What about? What’s NCIS?”
“Naval Criminal Investigative Service.”
“I’ve got nothing to talk to you about,” Jeremy informs her rudely while turning around to come face to face with Gibbs with me standing slightly behind him.
“I’m Special Agent Gibbs. Same agency you haven’t heard of before. Only I don’t take it personally anymore,” Gibbs tells him.
“I’ve got to go inside.”
“We know where you work, Jeremy. We suspect you’re the one that called little Creek about the stabbing. You need to tell us what you saw,” I cut in before him and Gibbs get into a pissing condense.
“I can’t say anything.”
“Did the assistant Director Rober have a little chat with you?” Gibbs asks him while moving me behind him when Jeremy starts glaring at me.
“He put me on administrative leave. I’m under investigation.”
“Rober didn’t know,” Kate asks without asking.
“No,” Gibbs tells her before turning his attenuation back to Jeremy and add, “You were using the satellite without their knowledge.”
“Why were you watching Lieutenant Commander Egan?” I ask when Gibbs stops for a breath.
“Who?” Jeremy asks me like I just said the sky is purple.
“The Naval officer who was murdered,” Kate informs him.
“You play ball with me, I can square it with Rober,” Gibbs bribes him.
“You can do that?” Jeremy questions Gibbs in surprise at what he can make happen.
“With the exception of finding a decent barber, Gibbs can do pretty much anything he says he can,” Kate informs Jeremy.
“The only other thing Gibbs can’t do is finding as good employee,” I mumble so that Kate and Jeremy don’t hear me but Gibbs does and has to hide his smile.
“I was watching,” Jeremy enlightens us before adding after a moment, “Not watching… I wasn’t
watching the guy in the wetsuit. I was watching something else and happened to notice activity at the edge of the screen.”

“What kind of something else would this be?” Gibbs inquires of him.

“A person.”

“Female person?” I ask him next.

“Yeah.”

“Kind of a babe female person?” Gibbs questions him.

“Really hot. I stumbled across her by accident. She was polar tanning.”

“Nude winter sunbathing,” Kate informs Gibbs when he looks confused.

“Must get cold,” Gibbs says without much thought on the matter.

“Oh, it does,” I tell him.

“Oh, she was sir,” Jeremy enlightens Gibbs while giving me a look.

“And you think that’s an appropriate use for a billion dollar satellite, Jeremy?” Kate asks Jeremy.

“I got a little off track with my priorities.”

“That happens with hot babes sometimes. So you didn’t see who attacked Commander Egan?” Gibbs quires Jeremy.

“When I tried to go close, the image pixilated. All I saw was him go down. Whoever it was ran off before I could adjust the picture.”

“And that’s it?”

“If I had access to the Agency’s computer, I could show you exactly what I saw. All satellite transmissions are recorded on a hard drive at Langley.”

“I want the recording of a satellite transmission,” Gibbs says when he gets Rober on the phone while we sit in the car. “Well, let me put on Mister Wirth on. He can explain it to you.”

“Oh, no, no! No,” Jeremy yell, whispers to Gibbs when he tries to give him the phone.

“Your analyst was spying on a U.S. Naval base,” Gibbs said before stopping to listen to the other side of the phone, “I’m not sure what Congressional oversight committee he’s going to be spilling hid guts too. I mean, there are so many to choose from these days. We’ll be there in fifteen minutes.”

“Hey Gibbs, Alice. You want to feel Tony’s forearm?” Abby asks us while we walk into the lab.

“Why? I don’t want to catch an STD,” I tell Abby while scrunching up my face and putting Gibbs between Tony and me.

“I’ll pass. Copy of the CIA satellite transmission. I want to see if you can enhance the image,” Gibbs questions Abby.

“Find anything in Egan’s computer?” Kate asks Abby while Abby loads the copy of the satellite.

“He seems hinky about the sonar device’s reliability. His notes suggest that tests may have been altered,” Abby informs us on what she had found so far.

“Thank Egan was killed because he was going to blow the whistle on the project?” Tony questions us.

“Maybe,” Gibbs and I answer him while watching the big screen at what Abby is doing.

“Oh, I like this part,” Tony says when Abby gets the recording to run showing us the woman sunbathing.

“This is the only time the assailant is on the screen. Now watch what happens when I try to go in. the closer I get to the figure, the more the image distorts,” Abby explains to us while doing what she said.

“That’s it?” Gibbs asks her while raising his eyebrows.

“Sorry, Gibbs.”

“We can’t make an I.D. out of that,” Kate complains to us.

“Maybe we can find the polar chick.” Tony says while turning to us.

“Tony’s right. The beach is on a naval base. It’s a restricted area. Odds are she works at little creek.”

“Why do you insisted on reminding me that I am still missing the snowball fight on the devil’s front lawn,” I reminder her when my phone starts ringing.
“Do you want me to track her down, boss?” Tony asks Gibbs while I end the phone call.
“Why am I not surprised? Want me to handle it? At least I won’t drool,” Kate turns to Gibbs while asking when my phone rings again.
“No. No, DiNozzo took a wave for the team,” Gibbs says with a shake of his head while I end the call again.
“Thanks, boss. Hmm. Look at the muscle tone, would you? Definition on those abs. the lady works out a lot,” Tony drools over the girl on the computer screen.
“Maybe at the base gym?” Abby imports for him.
“She would have to be there every day to keep it that chiselled,” I inform Tony while checking out the abs.
“Oh, that makes sense,” Tony tells us while Kate shoves me when I don’t look away.
“Don’t hurt yourself. There’s going to be a lot of dangerous equipment you’re not familiar with,” Kate said while pulling me away from the image.
“That’s cute, Kate. Print me a copy, Abby?”
“Face only, Abby. Kate, you stay with her. Go over everything in Egan’s files. Find out everything you can about this device,” Gibbs orders.
“Can I have a full copy?” I ask Abby and Gibbs while bouncing on the spot, looking at the full pitch.
“My phone rings again but this time I just pull the battery out and ignore the looks I am getting.
“Oh, Jethro! Jethro, while I was examining our victim, I was telling Gerald about the Yanomami tribe. He found it fascinating,” Ducky informs us while walking into the lab.
“Nope, he was most likely not listening,” I tell him.
“This would affect our case somehow?” Gibbs asks Ducky at the same time.
“Of course! They were twenty three percent left handed. Lieutenant Commander Egan’s killer was left handed,” Ducky conveys to us.
“Anything else?”
“He never made it into the ocean. That good fortune allowed me to find traces of someone else’s DNA on his body. The DNA of a female.”
“Lieutenant Egan. If this is a bad time,” Gibbs said when the victim’s wife opens the door.
“Uh… I have to meet with the funeral director,” Egan say and it sounds like she has been crying again.
“I have a few questions or I could come back.”
“Uh, no. this is fine.”
“Did your husband have doubts about the project he was working on?” I ask Mrs Egan while we all stand in her lounge room again.
“I don’t know. He was pretty distant recently,” Egan informs us.
“Anything else bothering him?” Gibbs asks her.
“Not that I know of. He hated paying bills. Always gave him a stomach ache.”
“DO you know much about the people he worked with?” I ask her.
“Met them at a Christmas party. Couple of other times. He kept it pretty separate.”
“Because of the confidential nature of the project?” Gibbs asks her.
“I guess.”
“He spent a lot of time at work?” I ask her.
“Not in the beginning.”
“But that changed,” Gibbs finishes for her.
“In the last few months. He always said all he wanted was a simple pine box. But I can’t do that.”
“I think that he’ll be good with whatever you pick out, Lieutenant,” Gibbs tells her while we follow her out the front door.
“You haven’t found it,” Kate asks Gibbs while we walk down the pier.
“Not yet,” Gibbs answers her.
"You met me here to get me away from Overmeyer," Tyler states while walking over to us.
"I've got questions."
"All right."
"What was Commander Egan supposed to be doing that morning?" I ask Tyler.
"Underwater test of the device."
"Meaning?" Gibbs asks her.
"We seeded the ocean floor with targets."
"Dummy bombs?" I asks her.
"He was going to locate them."
"He had reservations about the project, didn’t he?" Gibbs probes him.
"Not that I know of. Is something wrong, Agent Gibbs?"
"I don’t know. Sometimes you think you have a bead on someone. It turns out bogus. It’s upsetting."
"The point is?"
"I didn’t take you for a party line type, commander."
"Commander wasn’t sure the range was as good as promised."
"What if commander Egan’s test turned up negative?"
"The navy wouldn’t pick up side-scan’s contract."
"And Overmeyer?" I ask.
"He’d lose a fortune."
"I’m gonna press my luck here," Gibbs informs us.
"Okay."
"What if the prototype isn’t found?" I question.
"Side-scan will probably be granted an extension, which would buy time to correct any problems. But there aren’t any serious flaws, agent Gibbs."
"Would you submit to a voluntary DNA swab? I’d like to eliminate you as Lieutenant commander Egan’s lover."
"There wouldn’t be much point. Tom and I had been seeing each other for months. Anything else you want to press?"
"No."
"I gotta get back."

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"I still can’t believe Lauren Tyler admitted to having an affair with Egan," Kate states while watching all the files being taken out of the building bottle.
"She’s smart. When I asked her for a DNA sample, she knew I had her. Always better to volunteer information than cover it up," Gibbs informs her.
"What are you people doing?" Overmeyer yells out at us.
"Seizing your files," I inform him while reading a message on my phone that I have put the battery back in.
"It’s part of our investigation into commander Egan’s death," Kate enlightens him.
"You thing he was killed for the prototype?" Overmeyer roars at us some more.
"I think he had concerns about performance," Gibbs communicates to him.
"WELL, YOU’RE WRONG."
"I try so hard not to be wrong, don’t I, Kate?" Gibbs asks.
"You’re very conscientious in that regard, Gibbs," Kate answers him with a sickly sweet voice.
"All right, we might have had a glitch or two, but nothing that wouldn’t have been corrected before production," Overmeyer admit to us.
"See, you I did figure for the party line guy," Gibbs states.
"What’s that supposed to mean?"
"Why was only one prototype made?" I asks him while looking as innocent as possible.
"I funded all the R and D personally. I don’t have pockets that deep. This loss is just devastating."
"But it buys you more time to fix the floors in the prototype."
"Are you insinuating I had something to do with Tom Egan’s death?"
“I try so hard not to insinuate, don’t I Kate,” Gibbs says again.
“You rarely insinuate, Gibbs,” Kate said in the same sickly sweet voice.
“Yeah. All I’m doing now is taking your record.”
“I’m calling my legal counsel,” Overmeyer informs us while grabbing his phone and dialling as number.
“I try so hard not to insinuate plenty. Here. Sign this,” Gibbs tells him while sticking a form under his nose.
“What’s that for?” Overmeyer asks while signing it with his left hand.
“It’s a receipt for your files. All of your files.”
“We know the killer is left handed. Jonathan Overmeyer is left handed. What about commander Tyler?” Kate asks Gibbs.
“She wears her watch on her left hand like most right-handed people do. Service file will verify,” Gibbs informs her.
“They could be in it together.”
“They could,” I tell her as Gibbs phone starts ringing.
“DiNozzo found our polar bear,” Gibbs answers the phone and listening for a while before hanging up and telling us,
“You were on the beach yesterday?” Gibbs asks the polar bear girl, when we get into the gym on base.
“Yes, sir. I know it’s against regs to sunbathe naked, but I never thought I’d be caught in winter. I don’t know what came over me. I just really hate tan lines. Don’t you,” Gina, the polar bear, asks us.
“Sometimes I lay awake at night thinking about that. Did you see anybody else there?”
“Well, that’s why I left. I heard a vehicle. Saw this guy getting out in a wetsuit. I covered up and left.”
“Was he alone?” Kate cuts in.
“I thought so at first. But as I was walking back to my car, I heard voices and glanced back. He was arguing with someone else.”
“Can you describe him?” I question her.
“Her. All I can tell you is that she was military.”
“We know the killer was left-handed which eliminates Commander Tyler. Her service file confirms she’s a righty,” Kate reminds us what we already know no that we are back in the NCIS squad room.
“We also know the killer is a women. Unled Overmeyer went ‘Norman bates’ on the guy. Actually, when you think about it, the M.O. match,” Tony rambles while thinking about it.
“DiNozzo,” Gibbs states making Tony shut up in and intend.
“What did you do?” Kate asks us.
“So basically we eliminated our two best suspects. Neither is a left-handed woman in the military,” Tony informs her.
“It appears so, yeah,” Gibbs says to them.
“Dam! And they were good suspects,” Kate complains.
“Yeah, maybe too good.”
“What do you mean?”
“We got carried away with the missing prototype.”
“Espionage and whistle blowing is a lot more intriguing than someone who is just really pissed off,” I finish for Gibbs.
“Egan’s wife?” Kate asks in surprise, while moving to sit on the end of her desk closes to Gibbs desk.
“Her husband was diving on someone else’s reef. Dipping the fin in the company pool. Pinging the wrong pong,” Tony informs her.
“Egan’s wife didn’t get back from the seminar until after the murder.”
“That’s what she said,” Gibbs tells her while taking a sip of his coffee.
“She’s a military officer.”
“Yes, she is.”
“And she plays golf,” I continued to say.
“Left-handed,” Gibbs and I finish together.
“W-wait. You could see that the clubs were left-handed with just a passing glance?” Kate questions Gibbs while giving me a look.
“My second wife played golf left-handed,” Gibbs informs Kate while taking another sip of his coffee.
“So?”
“When someone tries to split your skull open with a seven iron, it’s not a club you soon forget,” Tony explains to Kate.
“There was an edge in the Lieutenant’s voice when she said things had changed the last few months,” I informs everyone while thinking about that very moment.
“If she knew he was cheating on her…”
“Wait, just because she golfs left-handed doesn’t mean she actually is left-handed. I golf left-handed but I bat and I throw right-handed,” Kate tries to explain it away.
“So, you are a weirdo but that just proves it. Doesn’t prove a thing about the case though,” I informs Kate while leaning on the back of Gibbs chair.
“So you go both ways?” Tony ask her at the same time.
“All I’m saying is that we don’t actually have anything on her. We don’t even know if she knew that her husband was having an affair,” Kate tells us while throwing a paperclip at me but misses and it lands in Gibbs hair.
“Sure,” Gibbs tells her while I pull the paperclip out of his hair.
“So it’s just a hunch.”
“Yeah,” Tony says to her like it is common knowledge.
“There’s no proof.”
“No,” Gibbs informs her while taking yet another sip of his coffee.
“Hello,” Egan answers the door after Gibbs, Kate and I ring her door bell again.
“Lieutenant Egan,” Gibbs greets her.
“Please come on in.”
“Thank you,” I tell her.
“We have a dilemma to share with you,” Gibbs informs her when we get walk into her house and she shuts the door.
“Dilemma. What’s the problem?” Egan questions us.
“We think that your husband was killed because he was about to expose flaws in the side-scan prototype he was developing,” I explain to her.
“I see.”
“But we can’t prove it,” Kate tells her.
“There was only one prototype made and that was taken from the crime scene,” Gibbs continues to explain to her our problem.
“We’ve conducted a search, but so far no luck. We’ll have to find it to have a chance of building a case against the suspect.”
“You have a suspect?” Egan asks like that is the most important part we have told her.
“A witness saw a women arguing with your husband on the beach, just before he was stabbed.”
“We think it was the commanding officer, Lauren Tyler,” I tell her.
“There’s no easy way to ask you his, but did you know your husband was having an affair with her?”
“He was having an affair?” Egan asks us.
“It looks that way.”
“Can you confirm our suspicion that your husband was having doubts about this project?” Gibbs asks her.
“I’m afraid not. He never mentioned it,” Egan informs us.
“Okay. Thank you for your time. Sorry to have to drag you through this,” I tell her.
“What do you think happened to him? Why was he killed?”
“We think that he told Commander Tyler. And that when they both confronted Jonathan Overmeyer, he offered them money to keep them silent,” Gibbs tells her what we are thinking, not.
“And Tom refused.”
“Yes,” Kate informs her.
“He would never take money.”
“But Tyler went along. We believe they killed him, and had to hide the prototype fast.”
“We need to find it. If we don’t, we don’t have much of a case. It’s the only conclusive proof we have of defects,” Gibbs tells her before we turn around and walk down the path to the car out front.
“You think she took the bait?” Kate asks us once Egan closes the door to the house.
“Pretty hard to pass up getting away with murder and framing your husband’s lover,” I tell Kate from the other side of Gibbs.
“Well, if she’s guilty, she’s a pretty good actress.”
“Hey, what about yourself, kid?” Gibbs says to us both.
“This thing is so creepy.”
“Why? You still don’t believe she knew about her husband’s affair?” I ask Kate.
“The wife’s always the last one to know, Alice.”
“Don’t believe it,” Gibbs tells her.
“I hope you’re right. Otherwise we were pretty cold to a woman who just lost her husband.”
“Well, let’s find out,” Gibbs says while ringing Abby on his phone. Abs? Call your boy,” Gibbs orders her while getting in behind the wheel of our car. Kate gets in the passenger seat while I get in the back.

Gibbs, she’s on the move. I’ll redirect the satellite to you. Are you getting this?” Abby asks us once we see Egan moving in her house, we have been waiting down from her house all day and it is night know.
“Yeah,” Gibbs said while looking at the computer on Kate’s lap.
“Let’s roll,” Tony said while clipping up his belt.
“Hang on. Let’s get some separation.”
“She’s leaving the base. She’s turning onto highway two sixty four going south,” Abby informs us from her spot in MTAC.
“Okay, lieutenant. Let’s see where you’re going,” Gibbs says while starting the car and following Egan on the road.
“I hope she’s not just popping out for a big Mac,” Tony tells us.
“Tony do you think about anything but food and sex,” I asks Tony while gabbing onto the back of Gibbs chair to stop myself from falling over when he goes around the corner without slowing down.
“Where are you guys?” Abby asks us.
“Hanging back. A mile behind her,” Gibbs tells her.
“You know, we really should have our own satellite for surveillance,” Tony expresses to us.
“Yeah, okay, Tony. I’ll take that up with the Director. Three hours of satellite time equals your yearly salary.”
“You want everything Tony. Plane, satellite, girlfriend,” I say to Tony while looking at the computer on Kate’s lap.
“She’s turning,” Abby tells us again.
“We see it,” Kate responds to her.
“Abby?” Gibbs calls out when the computer image of Egan’s car becomes just static.
“I think Houston has a problem. Ash what’s going on?” Abby calls out to her boy toy.
“Lost the signal. Give me a second. The low-gain antenna has been intermittent. That’s why it’s off-
line for maintenance,” Ashton Kugel tells us while typing on his computer to fix it.
“We’re losing her,” Tony calls out to Abby, what we can all hear.
“You’re the man,” Abby calls when the satellite comes back on but not onto the car.
“Ash is the man if he gets our target back,” Gibbs says while checking the computer while driving.
“I’m looking for it,” Ashton Kugel tells us while searching for Egan’s car again.
“Take that right there,” Tony yells while pointing to the dirt road.
“We gotta take it. She did,” Gibbs tells him while turning the corner without slowing down again.
“Then what, Abby?” Kate asks.
“All right, I think that’s it,” Ashton Kugel tells us.
“You think?” Abby asks.
“He thinks?” I asks at the same time.
“It better be,” Kate says while we follow the car again.
“Do you need a hand?” Gibbs asks Egan when we walk to where she is un-hiding the prototype.
“You’re late,” Gibbs says to Tony the next day when he walks into the bullpen.
“So?”
“For Ducky.”
“So?”
“It was work related.”
“You’re late,” Gibbs says to Tony the next day when he walks into the bullpen.
“My phone has been ringing off the hook. It’s driving him crazy,” Kate said while nodding to the phone that is ringing again. Tony hits the end button on the phone.
“Well, she is driving me crazy.”
“What do you mean ‘driving you crazy’? You are crazy,” I point out from me spot next to Gibbs.
“She?” Kate asks.
“Apparently Miss ‘I don’t like tan lines,’ has found something she does like. Me,” Tony explains to us while sitting behind his desk.
“Any why is that a problem?”
“Well, let’s just say that she’s a lot more appealing from a distance. A geosynchronous distance.”
“She didn’t look so bad to me.”
“It’s not that. She’s just not my type.”
“Really? Female hard body likes to take her clothe off not you type?” Gibbs asks Tony.
“Well, there can only be one self-centred person per relationship,” I explain to Gibbs.
“I guess not,” Tony says while giving me a look for my reason.
“Well why don’t you just tell her that, then?” Kate asks Tony.
“I am.”
“By not answering her calls?”
“She’ll get the message,” Tony tells Kate as the phone starts ringing again, making Tony hit the end button again.
“Apparently not.”
“Well, she’d better get the message soon or you’re going to be getting one on a pink slip,” Gibbs tells Tony while signing the report for the case we just closed.
“You can’t fire me for something I have no control over!” Tony exclaimed.
“Talk to her,” Kate said like she is talking to a four year old and not a agent at NCIS.
“She’ll get the message!”
“You know, I’ll bet this is why number two came after you with a nine iron, wasn’t it? You just refused to sit down and talk things through,” Kate says to Gibbs while turn and facing him.
“I think it is because he is a workaholic and so she was having a bit on the side with someone else,” I tell Kate while looking through Gibbs email and deleting what he doesn’t need to see.
“Actually, that wasn’t it at all,” Gibbs informs Kate while smacking my leg.
“Oh. So what was it then?” Kate asks with a smile like she is going to find out something about Gibbs.
“Seven iron.”
“Hey, how was your date last night?” Tony questions Kate when she and me walk into the bullpen. “How did you know I had a date last night?” Kate asks while putting her stuff behind her desk. “He was the date, had to dress up for it,” I tell her while going to Gibbs desk and starting up his computer. “You talk very loud you’re on the phone. I’ve been meaning to say something,” Tony tells her. “You mean you eavesdropped,” Kate corrects him. “Guess it didn’t do too well, huh?” “He had to cancel.” “What excuse did he give?” “Surgery.” “Hey, that’s a good one! I’ve got to remember that. What was wrong with him?” “Me too,” I cut in while typing in Gibbs password. “He didn’t have surgery, Tony, he performed it,” Kate informs Tony. “Hey, how was your big date last night?” Abby asks while walking up to us, Kate gives Tony a look before walking away. “What’d I say?” “Date never happened. And Kate only just found out that Tony eavesdroppers on her conversions,” I informs Abby. “Oh. What excuse did he give?” “Surgery,” Tony tells her. “That’s a good one!” “Grab your stuff,” Gibbs orders while walking. “Where are we going?” Kate asks Gibb while walking back from the window and putting her phone in her pocket. “West Virginia.” “Almost heaven. ‘Take me home, country road.’ Old John Denver song. I’m going to grab my gear,” Tony says and adds the end bit when Gibbs gives him a raised eyebrow look that says, ‘shut up and do what I told you.’ “Clarksburg.” “What’s in Clarksburg, Gibbs?” I ask him while locking his computer and grabbing my bag. “Junk dealer… stumbled onto a leg.” “We’re driving to West Virginia to look at a leg?” Kate questions Gibbs. “It belongs to a Marine.” “How can you tell from a leg?” Tony asks Gibbs like that is the strangest thing Gibbs has ever said. “Gibbs. NCIS,” Gibbs says to the local cops at the scene. The leg is on a set of stairs, sitting like the person was walking down the stairs and just left his leg once he got half way down. “How do,” Dawson, the local cop, says to Gibbs. “Find the rest of the body?” “Yes, sir. Mister Greed found to on the dumpster. When he realized what he was holding, he tossed it to get rid of it. Landed here. Kind of funny, ain’t it?” “What?” “How it landed. Like it was climbing the stairs.” “You think finding the severed leg of a Marine is funny?” “No, sir. No, sir, I don’t?” “Find the rest of the body?” “Not yet. Local chief of police has his boys checking all the dumpsters and the town garbage pit. Well, I’ll leave you all to it.” “Tony, laser and sketch.”
“Got it,” Tony answers him while doing as he is told.
“Kate, take photos.”
“Yeah.”
“What have we got here, Duck, other than the obvious?”
“Well, with the absence of haemorrhagic tissue at the point of injury, I’d say the limb was severed post mortem,” Ducky rambles to Gibbs and me while looking at the leg.
“Time of death?” I asks Ducky while knelling do next to the leg.
“From a leg? I’ll tell you what, Alice, Gibbs. You find me a liver in that leg, and I’ll estimate you a time of death.”
“What’s that wedged in the sole?” Kate asks us.
“From a small seed a mighty trunk may grow. There’s not much more for me to do here. I saw a great antique store around the corner. Give me a shout if you need me,” Ducky says while grabbing the seed of and bag and tag it. He then gets up and walks off to the shop he was talking about.
“Ducky,” Gibbs shouts and when Ducky turns around he adds, “I need you here.”
“Jethro, I refuse to speculate on the time of death of the Marine missing that leg. However, I will tell you that the limb has been dead more than,” Ducky tells Gibbs making him smirk at him, “no, less than twenty four hours.”
“I’ll shout if I need you,” Gibbs informs him while he continues to smirk. He turns and walks back to the truck where the guy who found the leg is, I follow him to take notes for him.
“Did you find the boot?” I ask him when we come to a stop in front of him.
“I was just looking for junk. Stuff people throw out,” Green, the guy who found the leg, informs us while turning a green colour.
“What’s that?” Gibbs asks him.
“Yep. No law against taking stuff folks thrown out. Why are you puttin’ on rubber gloves?” Green asks us while Gibbs puts on his gloves.
“We’re going to need your prints?”
“For what?”
“To separate them from those we find on the leg,” I tell him while Gibbs takes the prints.
“You can take fingerprints off a leg?” Green asks Gibbs, I walk over to Tony and Kate while Gibbs gets the last few details of the man. Gibbs has already taken the notebook of me, so I have nothing to do there.
“I don’t get the whole tattoo thing,” Tony says while Kate takes a photo of the tat.
“I’ll add that to the ever-growing list of things you don’t get,” Kate informs Tony while giving him a look.
“Abby’s got tattoos,” I remind him.
“You know, on a woman? It means she’s up for anything,” Tony says with a chuckle.
“No comment,” Tony says with a chuckle.
“Well, what do you thing Kate or I have a tat?”
“You don’t have a tat,” Tony says while pointing at Kate before turning to me and saying, “You, I won’t know. When I meet you I would have said no but know I am leaning to yes.”
“And if I did, that would just blow your theory to hell now, wouldn’t it?” Kate informs Tony while giving him a look.
“Okay, say for a minute I believe you’ve got one. Where is it?”
“Nowhere you, will ever see.”
“So I pulled a partial off our leg that isn’t the junk collector’s. Could be the victim’s,” Abby informs us once we get to the lab, after she superglued the leg.
“Run it through the military database,” Gibbs orders her.
“So any other body part show up?”
“No.”
“Isn’t that a little bit hinky?”
“It’s more than a little bit. All we found is a tattooed leg, a sock and a boot,” I tell Abby.
“You’re forgetting about our interesting little bit of botanical evidence,” Abby said while holding up the bit of plant of the boot.
“Oh, yeah, that. Yeah, well, I want the life history; family, where it grew up,” Gibbs said with a smile.
“College transcripts? I know.”
“Yeah.”

“Our victim had a titanium ankle joint which I’m about to remove,” Ducky informs us when the door opens and we walk in.
“Too young for arthritis,” Gibbs states.
“Yeah. It was most likely due to an accident; auto, motorcycle, skiing.”
“Polo. Polo is very dangerous sport,” Tony cuts in.
“Yes, the joint will have a serial number traceable to the doctor who performed the surgery.”
“Anything else?” I ask Ducky before he and Tony can get into it again.
“Well, as I suspected, our Marine was dismembered post-mortem. The jagged teeth pattern on the femur bone suggests that a saw was used.”
“Ouch!” Tony says with a wince of sympathy.
“Well he didn’t feel it, Tony.”
“It still makes me wince.”
“Well, give how straight and clean the cut was, it was almost certainly some kind of power saw. I wonder if they still have the Eurail pass. Yeah. In the summer of my eighteenth year, my grandfather gave me a Eurail pass to celebrate my advancement to University. I travelled to nine different countries. Met an Austrian girl named Giselle, who left her fingerprints on my heart, visited all the major museums of Europe. The artwork was extraordinary. Da Vinci, Rembrandt, Van Gogh, Renoir, Botticelli,” Ducky rambles on while sliding the leg into the freezer.
“I like saying Botticelli.”
“And that brings me to Christy Brown, the Irish poet and painter. Yes, he suffered from cerebral palsy. Learned to paint with his foot. Quite remarkable. He wrote an autobiography, ‘my left foot,’ which became an exceptional film starring Daniel Day Lewis.”
“That’s a right foot,” Gibbs corrects Ducky about our leg.
“I understand getting through high school without knowing left from right but not collage,” I inform them.
“Oh, so it is. Oh, well,” Ducky says without a care in the world that he got the leg wrong, calling it a left leg.

“According to our research,” I answers him.
“Here it is. May fifteenth, two thousand. I implanted that ankle in marine Private First class Thomas Dorn.”
“What can you tell me about him?” I ask the doctor.
“I can tell you a lot about his ankle. I don’t even remember the rest of him.”
“Seems to be a recurring problem,” Gibbs states.
“The ankle?”
“No, the rest of him. His leg was found in Clarksburg, West Virginia, trash bin earlier this morning,”
I inform the doctor.
“Just the leg?”
“So far,” Gibbs says.
“How deteriorated was the leg?”
“It wasn’t. The M.E. estimated he died within the previous twenty four hours,” I inform the doctor.
“Is there a problem?” Gibbs asks when the doctor just stares out us for a minute.
“According to his military record, P-F-C Dorn died two years ago,” Peter informs us.

“P-F-c Dorn’s service record. He was only in the corps eleven months before the accident. He was about to get a medical discharge when he died,” Toy reads off what he has located about the marine who is missing the leg.

“Got the death certificate signed by a Doctor Silvia Chalmers in Harmony, West Virginia,” Kate takes over from him while informs us what she found.

“Harmony?”
“Yeah, population sixteen hundred. Sounds cute, doesn’t it?”
“Cause of death myocardial infarction,” Gibbs reads off the death certificate that Kate hands him.
“Heart attack at twenty two? First a brain fart and know a heart attack?” I ask everyone while reading the death certificate.

“As Abby would say,” Kate says before stopping for a second and then finishes, “Pretty hinky.”
“I do believe the die is cast, however. If your parents and grandparents live to be old, so will you,” Tony informs us of his believes.
“I had an aunt who died at report?” Gibbs informs Tony while drinking his coffee.
“It’s just a theory.”

“Where’s the autopsy report?” I ask while looking at the file Kate has handed Gibbs.
“There isn’t one,” Kate answers me.
“You mean you didn’t find it,” Gibbs corrects her.
“No. I mean no autopsy. The doctor signed a death certificate but that was it.”
“Small towns. You can get away with murder,” Tony says with a smile.

“The hell you can! You find the doctor in Harmony. Why there was no autopsy report. Find out where this body is buried. You get a court order to dig up P-F-C Dorn and you have that body shipped back here to Ducky,” Gibbs orders Kate and Tony while yelling and slamming his hands down on his desk.

“Our seed matured and fell in late fall. It comes from a monoecious yellow flower. Not too showy. The male and female appearing in March to April in separate spherical hems. The left is palmately veined, it’s four to eight inches wide, ovate in shape and has three to five lobes,” Abby informs us when we walk into her office to see her sitting behind the computer.

“Abby, are we ever going to get to the tree?” Gibbs asks Abby in an annoyed tone of voice.

“Platanus occidentals. Or more commonly known as...”
“A sycamore tree,” Gibbs, Abby and I finish together.

“I’m afraid so,” Abby informs us.
“Pretty much grows everywhere, it is like weeds,” I state.
“Yep.”

“What killed him?” Gibbs asks Abby.
“Digitalis,” Abby asks him from her spot next to Tony desk.
“The heart medication?” I ask her in confusion.

“Yep. The tox level in Dorn’s leg alone was enough to kill a bull.”
“Would an overdose give the symptoms of a heart attack?” Gibbs questions her.
“Not just the symptoms. Oh, okay! So you think our leg and that marine that died two years ago of a heart attack are tied together.”
“I do not believe in coincidences.”
“What about that rock formation on the moon that looks like Jay Lenos’ chin?”
“It’s perfectly normal,” Tony tells Kate while they walk into the bull pen.
“On a race track maybe,” Kate informs him.
“Women will never understand taking a car ride and trying to beat your best time.”
“I hate it when men do that,” Abby says while pulling a face.
“See, it’s just a women thing.”
“How’d you do?” Gibbs asks them.
“Pretty good. I beat my time by four minutes including construction detours.”
“In Harmony,” I correct Tony.
“Oh. Ah… Doc Chalmers is a very sweet little old lady who unfortunately also happens to be the local coroner. Small town, Boss. Small town.”
“A woman claiming to be Dorn’s sister ID’d the body and then conned her into skipping the autopsy and then conned her into skipping the autopsy and cremating the body,” Kate informs us.
“Cremation. It’s a dead end,” Abby exclaims making us all star at her, “What?”
“This woman must be some sweet talker,” Gibbs states.
“Well, it’s more Doctor Chalmers is a very conn-able little old lady,” Kate corrects him.
“Probably gets her roof shingled and driveway tarred every year,” Tony tells us what he thinks.
“You put a trace on her? Or did you spend all your time flirting with Tony?” I ask Kate.
“Well, I did the best I can balancing my laptop while pulling five G turns,” Kate informs us while ignoring my second question.
“Ha! That’s an exaggeration, Boss. I mean, maybe three G’s once,” Tony jumps to defend himself.
“Ten Mile Road, Comus, Maryland.”
“Keys,” Gibbs orders while holding his hand out.
“What? I can’t drive ‘cause Kate’s a chicken?” Tony dares to question Gibbs.
“I’m not a chicken,” Kate exclaims.
“You can’t drive ‘cause you’re not going,” Gibbs corrects him.
“Oh, that’s different. Where am I going?” Tony asks while giving me the key for Gibbs.
“You’re doing a background check on Melissa Dorn. Kate, are you coming?” Gibbs ask Kate while he puts a hand on my lower back and leads me to the elevator.
“Watch her body language,” Gibbs orders Kate when he stops the car in front of the victim’s sister’s house.
“What are we looking for, short of a confession?” Kate questions him.
“Sometimes it’s not what they say, it’s what they don’t say.”
“Which translates from Gibbs to English to, ‘we don’t have a search warrant and this is the only way in.’ so Kate don’t piss her off,” I inform Kate while we all get out of the car.
“What’s wrong?” Kate asks Gibbs when he doesn’t move from beside the car.
“You know what kind of tree this is?” Gibbs asks her.
“Botany was my weakest subject.”
“Yeah, that’s because you spent it ogling the teacher and not hearing what he was teaching. And this is a sycamore tree,” I state, while we all walk up the walk path and I knock on the door.
“Hi. Can I help you?” Melissa, the marine’s sister, asks when she opens the door.
“You already have,” Gibbs says to her with a smile.
“You would have liked Howard. He was the life of the party,” Melissa informs us about her brother while we sit in her lounge room. I am sitting next to Kate while Gibbs sits on his own.
“He was your half-brother,” Kate ask her to conform what we already know.
“Yeah. We were raised by our father. Do you have any brothers and sisters?” Melissa asks Gibbs while ignoring Kate and me.
“No,” Gibbs asks with another smile while writing in his book.
“An only child? I figured as much.”
“Hmm. How so?”
“You have all the classic trails of a first born; confident, and pay attention to detail, perfectionist, difficulty sharing.”
“Guilty, guilty, guilty. Depends.”
“Hmm. So why visit after two years?”
“We’re working on another case, and there might be a tenuous connection,” I inform her while writing in my book what she is doing and saying.
“How can I help?”
“Do you have any of your brother’s personal effects?” Kate questions her.
“Anything that I didn’t donate I threw away. It would’ve made me sad. Oh, where are my manners? Would you like some coffee?”
“Oh, yeah, I’d love some coffee,” Gibbs says to her.
“None for me, thanks,” Kate answers her while she is still looking at Gibbs.
“No thank you, but thanks for the offer,” I say with a smile and node.
Gibbs and Melissa go into the kitchen for the coffee while Kate and I look in the draws and cupboards for anything that can help us on the case.

“You weren’t buying any of that, were you?” Kate asks Gibbs while we walk out to the car.
“How can I help?” Gibbs questions Kate.
“You know, her charm.”
“Is it really that hard to believe, Kate, that I might be attractive to a women?”
“That’s not what I meant.”
“Did you find us anything that’ll get us a search warrant?”
“No,” I say with a pout because we have not found anything to get a warrant.
“Well, she told you that she lives alone, but the toilet seat was up in the downstairs bathroom,” Kate informs him.
“Yeah so? It just means that she has had a boyfriend or boy toy over recently.”
“Oh, you can tell that one to the judge,” Gibbs informs Kate.
“Okay, well Abby found a piece of straw in Dorn’s sock and there is a barn around the back,” Kate says making Gibbs and me give her a look, “Okay, I found nothing to give us probable cause.”
“Maybe I did.”

“Question, can you match DNA from tress like you can with humans?” Gibbs questions Abby in the lab after talking to the victim’s sister.
“Absolutely. Plant DNA, like human DNA, is unique to each plant, so you can distinguish one sycamore tree from another,” Abby answers him.
“Abby, try matching these to the seed we found in Dorn’s boot,” Gibbs states while handing her two evidence bags with a seed in each.

“Is the other sample from another location?”
“Nope, Gibbs picked them from the same tree. You know how he likes to make every one’s life hard, and here I was thinking he didn’t do it to you,” I answer her while holding out a caf-pow I picked up for her.
“So you want me to run the test twice?”
“Yeah. How long before you have something on both samples?” Gibbs questions her while giving me a look.
“Depends on whether or not you want it fast or you want it right.”
“Both.”
“Both. Hmm… four… seven… divided by… six hours.”
“Clock’s ticking Abs.”

“What do you have?” Gibbs questions Tony and Kate while he walks into the bullpen.
“Six letter word for reason to commit crime,” Tony reads off the cross-word he is doing.
“DiNozzo.”
“That’s seven letters.”
“Works for me. What do you got?”
“PFC Dorn purchased a term policy for three quarters of a million two months before his heart attack in Harmony. The beneficiary is his only living relative…”
“His half-sister Melissa. She and Dorn fed some sucker digitalis and dropped him off in Harmony,” Kate cuts him off.
“Harmony – a small crappy town where she identifies the sucker as her brother, cons the old lady coroner with crocodile tears into cremating the body and not performing an autopsy.”
“The insurance company paid the claim?” I ask them before they get into it too much.
“Sire did.”
“Get the name of the adjuster?” Gibbs questions him.
“Stanley Gordon, Rexford Mutual, Baltimore.”
“Why are you two still here?”
“Hey Abby, how are you doing?” I ask Abby when I walk into the lab and turn down her music, so that Duck and Gibbs can have a private conversation.
“Hey Alice. Getting there slowly. Do you know why Gibbs is having me run the test twice?”
“Yeah. He is a sick person who likes to make life hard, like I already told you.”
“Why are you doing down here?”
“Gibbs has had six coffees today and Ducky is talking to him. I am bored waiting for something to pop.”
“So how did your date go?”
“What date?”
“The one you had after the case with Jane Doe buried alive.”
“I spent the night sanding Gibbs boat.”
“That bad.”
“Oh it gets worse?”
“He won’t take no for an answer. Can you maybe block his number on my phone for me?”
“Yeah, give it here,” Abby said while holding out her hand. I give her my phone and she hits a few buttons and she gives it back to me.
“Thanks.”
“Match!” Abby shouts while throwing her hands into the air but after checking it she drops her arms and adds, “It’s not from the same tree.”
“Hey, what’s wrong?” Gibbs asks while walking into the lab.
“Look at it.”
“It looks like a match.”
“Precisely.”
“Good work, Abby.”
“No it’s not! You gave me two samples from the same tree. ‘B’ matched and ‘A’ didn’t. I screwed up!”
“Gibbs gave you two seed from two different trees,” I inform Abby while taking a sip of her caf-pow only to pull a disgusted look.
“What?!”
“The idea of matching plant DNA was a bit hinky for me,” Gibbs informs her.
“Oh ye of little faith.”
“Abby, come on. All I did was give you a blind test.”
“Well, you could have done that by not telling me which sample came from the suspect’s sycamore.”
“I didn’t think of that.”
“Oh!”
“This puts Dorn at Melissa’s house. Do you know what that means?”
“You’ve got probable cause.”
“We have probable cause,” I state at the same time.
“Tony you take the barn. Kate, you got the house,” Gibbs orders while we get ready to search Melissa’s house. We get what we need out of the back of the car.

“What’re you gonna take? That didn’t come out right. Not what I meant,” Kate questions Gibbs.

“Yeah, I know what you meant.”

“What am I to do, Boss?” I question Gibbs while closing the door.

“You take the house with Kate.”

“Well, was my coffee that good?” Melissa asks when she opens the door and sees Gibbs there.

“We’re here to execute a search warrant,” Gibbs informs her while giving her the search warrant.

“For what? My brother died two years ago. His body was cremated.”

“Don’t you mean it was Corporal Morgan’s body that was cremated?” I ask her while she shuts the door.

“I really don’t know what you think you’re going to find here. Why do you keep staring at me? I could never have killed Tommy. I loved him!” Melissa questions Gibbs while I search the living room.

“A Gunny who knew both of you told me the same thing. Funny, though, he didn’t know that you were brother and sister,” Gibbs informs her. “Looks like you could use a glass of water,” Gibbs states while walking out of the living room to get some for her.

“Thank you. Have Abby compare her prints with those on her brother’s leg,” Gibbs orders Kate while taking Melissa’s glass after she takes a sip and bag and tagging it.

“Blood on the floor. Nicks in the concrete. Looks like they were made by a power saw. That’s got to be where she did her slicing and dicing,” Tony yells from the door as he comes into the house.

“What?” Gibbs and I yell when Tony pulls out his gun after looking around the room.

“There’s someone else.”

“Who else is here? Who else is here?” Kate yells out Melissa while Gibbs and Tony run upstairs to find out.

“Doctor Chalmers!” Kate exclaims when Gibbs and Tony lead the good doctor into the living room.

“Good afternoon, Agent Todd!” Chalmers says with a sickly sweet smile, in her little old lady tone of voice.

“You were in on it!”

“Each order has its own chemical marker. How else would a manufacturer recall a specific batch in...
quality control problem?” I questions the good old doctor.

“You shouldn’t have done it, mama,” Melissa exclaims while turning to face her mother who is sitting on the other end of the couch.

“Calm yourself, Melissa. Just calm yourself. They can only prove that you defrauded an insurance company,” Chalmers orders her daughter.

“No, Mama. They can prove everything. They know you killed him with digitalis. They know you cut up Tommy into little pieces and they know you threw him away in the garbage,” Melissa informs her mother making Chalmers slap her across the face.

“Stop! She’s just hysterical. You can’t use any of this in court,” Chalmers exclaims to us.

“She was read her rights and she waved them. We can and will use it. Now if one of you will tell us where to find the rest of humpty-dumpty we will put him back together again” I explain to the mother.

“You little fool. They couldn’t prove anything.”

“Yes, we can.”

“I don’t care anymore, mama. I loved Tommy and you murdered him,” Melissa exclaims.

“Like you killed his best friend.”


“What about the marine’s family that you and your daughter murdered and them covered up? They still think their son is coming home. She didn’t have to kill the mar,” I explain to her and without a thought or hesitation she slaps me in the middle of my sentence. My head flicks to the side and I loss balance and hit my head on the coffee table which giving me an instant headache.

“’It’s a love heart, on her ass,” I informs Tony what Kate’s tattoo is when I walk into the ball pen after school while try everyone tries to find the missing body parts.

“Alice,” Kate exclaims at me before adding, “How the hell do you know that?”

“I know lots of things. Like that your date is really a married man who can’t get it up for his wife.”

“Right.”

“I ran a background check on him.”

“How’s the?” Gibbs questions me while pointing to my face where there is a split lip and big bruise in the shape of Chalmers’s hand.

“I still have a headache. Ducky said that it will come and go for a couple of days but beside that I am good,” I inform him while moving over to Gibbs and sitting on the edge of his desk.

“Okay. Can you print out the report I know you have already written.”

“Can do,” I say while leaning over Gibbs and typing on the computer but I suddenly get dizzy and fall so I am laying across Gibbs lap.

“Whoa, are you okay,” Gibbs asks me while putting his hands on my hips and pull me so I am sitting across his lap. Tony and Kate look up at the sound of Gibbs voice and look like they are surprised to see how we are sitting, his right arm is around my back and sitting on my right hip, while his left on is around under my breasts on sitting on top of his other hand. My right hand is holding onto his left upper arm, my left arm is just sitting on my lap and my head is leaning on his right shoulder.

“Yeah, just got dizzy.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yeah. Yeah,” I mumble but I don’t try to get up.

“Alice, if something is not right, tell me,” Gibbs whispers so Tony and Kate doesn’t hear before stating to them, “Get back to work.”

“My head hurts. A lot.” I mumble while pushing me head closer into his neck and close my eyes. Kate and Tony get to work while trying to not look like they are watching us still.

“Okay, what pain killers have you been take?”

“None.”

“Why not?”

“The doctor said I won’t need them.”

“Okay,” Gibbs says while moving the chair back and opens his draw where he keeps his gun and
grabs out a bottle of pills with his right hand. “Here take this,” Gibbs whispers to me while holding out one pill for the pain.
“I don’t have anything with.”
“Okay, don’t say I don’t do anything,” Gibbs says while handing me, his coffee.
“Thank you Gibbs,” I whisper while taking the pills and then placing my head back in the crook of his neck.
“If it’s any consolation, Gibbs, Gunny Sergeant Alvarez’s death was almost instantaneous,” Ducky explains while looking over a dead marine recruiter.
“We can’t place him on the gurney until we take pictures and Gerald has the camera and he’s nowhere to be found.”
“Can we hurry it up? I don’t think gunnery sergeant Alvarez would appreciate being seen like this,” I state while looking at the body slumped over his desk.
“You knew the man?” Ducky asks Gibbs and me.
“No,” Gibbs answers him before walking away to look around the crime scene.
“But if it’s any consolation, gunny, he’s the absolute best we’ve got,” Ducky informs the body and continues to talk to the body but I walk away.
“DiNozzo, where’s my bullet?” Gibbs yells making me flinch at the volume.
“Hopefully in this box or the wall behind it. Got your knife on you, boss?” Tony answers him while braking on of Gibbs rules.
“Rule number nine, never go anywhere without a knife.”
“Go anywhere without a knife,” Kate overlaps Gibbs.
“Are you sure about that? I thought nine was never ask a girl her weight on the first date,” Tony says while taking the knife Gibbs is offering him and flicks it open to cut open the box looking for the bullet.
“Well that depends entirely on if you want a second one or not Tony,” Kate informs him once Kate was done.
“What’ve you got, Kate?” Gibbs questions Gibbs who was talking to the witnesses.
“Well, the kids can’t tell us much except for where Alvarez was sitting when he was popped. Several people reported hearing a gunshot around thirteen hundred, but no eyewitnesses,” Kate reads off to Gibbs.
“I bet you had no problem getting date wearing one of those, Gibbs,” Tony says while holding up a poster of a marine in uniform.
“Dating was not exactly my problem in the Corps, DiNozzo. What did the Leo say?” Gibbs questions Kate.
“It might be gang-related. Alvarez had a couple of run-ins with the locals. Last month they threw a cinder block through the window here,” Kate continues to inform Gibbs.
“Well, if it was gang-bangers, they’re packing serious heat. It went straight through the sheet rock into what looks like some kind of toy warehouse,” Tony informs us while looking through the bullet hole.
“Give me my knife back. You two better get moving. Don’t come back without my bullet,” Gibbs orders while grabbing his knife of Tony and then placing his hand on my back and leading me out of the crime scene to his car.

“Major Dougherty?” Gibbs asks when we get to a recruiting centre.
“Yes?” Dougherty looks up over his desk to us in surprise.
“Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. This is Alice, my daughter,” Gibbs informs the major while I take notes for the interview.
“Five months in Iraq, I dint lose a single man.”
“What can you tell me about the Gunnery Sergeant?”
“He was a legend. A career recruiter who never missed a quota.”
“Any ideas?” I ask him softly.
“We’ve had some trouble with gangs in the neighbourhood. Vandalism, mostly. They don’t like it
when the kids around here choose a career over hanging out on the street corner.”
“What about complaints filed from the kids he did recruit?” Gibbs questions the major.
“There were a few.”
“I’ll need to see those.”
“Not a problem.”
“The real ones, major. The one that tend to surface when you don’t make your quota.”
“Hell, if it helps you catch his killer, I’ll give you his whole damn filing cabinet, Agent Gibbs, Alice.”
“All right.”
“Thank you for your time sir. And I apologies for my,” I say to the major and hesitate for a second before continuing to say, “father. He really doesn’t like marines dying or behind stonewalled to save face.”
“That’s ok, ma’am. If it helps him find the murderer I would let him be as rude as he likes,” Dougherty informs me while shaking my hand before I follow Gibbs out of the room and to the car again.
“So what next daddy?” I ask Gibbs sarcastically with clipping my seat belt as Gibbs starts the car.
“You’re a bit young to be an agent or secretary,” Gibbs asks me while talking a corner without slowing down like normal. “How is your head?”
“Fine.”
“Alice.”
“It’s getting better, it only hurts when you talk to Tony.”
“Ha. Only I promise not to talk to Tony then.”
“Gibbs I’m serious.”
“I know.”
“It’s only been a couple of days. It is normal for it to still hurt for a while.”
“I know that too. If you want, Abby can cover that bruise for you.”
“Yeah. I’ll talk to her. Gibbs can I ask you a favour?”
“What?”
“Will you maybe come to my graduation ceremony please?”
“Why are you asking me that?”
“The only person who will come and see me graduate is Kate. I don’t want to be that sad girl who only her sister comes to see it.”
“Alice what has gotten into you?”
“I just want to show the popular girls that I am not a weird kid who spends all her time with her sister.”
“You’re not weird. Trust me.”
“Okay.”
“I’ll come but it’ll cost you.”
“What’ll it cost me?”
“Coffee. For the rest of the year and next.”
“You know you are cheap right,” I inform Gibbs making him laugh at me but smiled none the least.
“You want to stop up here at the shop so I can get us some coffee?”
“On it boss.”
“Thanks you daddy,” I say sarcastically as Gibbs stops.
“I got a present for you, Kate,” Gibbs says to Kate while walking into the bullpen with me.
“Okay? What is it?” Kate asks while looking at Gibbs.
“Seven years’ worth of Gunnery sergeant Alvarez’s personal and professional correspondence. Its sorted by category,” Gibbs orders while dropping the files on her desk.
“Which are?”
“I’m going to leave that part of it up to you.”
“Oh, come on, Gibbs. At least tell me what I’m looking for?”
“Same thing we’re all looking for, Kate. An murderer,” Gibbs orders her again while leading me towards the elevator to go see Abby.

“Oh, why didn’t I take the damn dolls?” Kate says to herself.

“Ha! Gerald, to Abby, please,” Abby imitates Ducky.

“Does Ducky know you do that?” Gibbs questions Abby.

“Hey Gibbs, Alice. I was just about to run this through the ballistics lab.”

“Good, because when you’re done, I want to see that mock-up of the trajectory on the computer.”

“Then I’m gone.”

“Why are all these dolls naked?” I question everyone while giving the dolls a look of confusion.

“Don’t look at me, boss, Alice. Must be a goth thing,” Tony answers me, while we walk into the ballistics lab.

“It definitely wasn’t a pistol, Gibbs. Seven points six two millimetres,” Abby informs Gibbs.

“A rifle,” I state.

“The problem is I can’t tell which kind. Hopefully I can look it up on the plates.”

“Why don’t you start with what it’s not, Abby?” Gibbs states to her.

“Well, I know it’s not an AK forty seven. There’s lots of those floating around D.C. The grooving’s all wrong. Without knowing the exact make of the rifle, I’m going on guess work, but I think it explains why there’s no eyewitnesses. Every rifle has a certain range where they experience maximum penetration power. It has to do with the ammo load, the length of the barrel, and the rifle. We know our round went through a marine, ricocheted off an office chair, through a box, a sheet rock wall and ended in our doll’s head. There’s no way that shot came from just outside the window or even across the street. The shooter was long range. Really long range,” Abby explains to us while importing it into her computer and it pulls up a building way across the street.

“Our shooter is a sniper,” Gibbs states while looking at the computer and the line the bullet took.

“Relax your hand or you’re never going to get it in your mouth,” Kate laughs at Tony while he tries to eat with the chopsticks.

“I’m trying, but this thing’s too damn slippery,” Tony says while dropping his food back into the take out box again.

“You’re never going to impress a girl like that.”

“Oh, whatever. Just promise me the next time we decide to do this, Kate, make sure that they don’t forget the forks. No one like a show off. Screw this. Do you have any soup?” Tony questions Kate making her pull it out with a chuckle, he takes it while saying, “Ah.”

“That better not be mine, DiNozzo,” Gibbs states while walking through the bullpen, his voice makes Tony stop drinking the soup.

“Gibbs ordered soup?” Tony questions us, and Kate and I node, “Great,” Tony says to us before turning to Gibbs and saying, “If it’s any consolation, it’s not very good.”

“Whose chow Mein?”

“Tony’s. I wouldn’t touch it, he was trying to eat it and drooled all over it,” I inform Gibbs.

“Good,” Gibbs says while snatchig the box of food, and continues to walk to his desk where I am sitting, “So anything interesting in Alvarez’ complaint file?”

“Well it seems he had a gift for exaggerating the opportunities available in the Marine Corps,” Kate informs Gibbs while he pulls me out of his chair and sits down himself and I take a seat on the edge of the desk.

“You’ll like this one, boss. One guy wanted to be a paramedic, so Alvarez guaranteed him the Corps would train him to save lives,” Tony reads off the file making Gibbs laugh while lifting the chopsticks to his mouth.

“What’s wrong with that?”

“The Marine Corp doesn’t have medical personnel,” Gibbs explains to Kate around a mouth full of food.

“They’re all navy,” Tony explains to Kate.

“Technically he was correct. I mean, Marines do save lives mostly through the use of superior
firepower,” I say what I am thinking.

“Well, that’s pretty much his M.O. The bait and switch. This kid wanted to be a pilot. Alvarez told him that he’d be sitting in a cockpit by his second year,” Kate reads from the next file.

“Plane mechanic?” Tony asks her.

“Close. Ejection seat technician.”

“Any of them contain threats?” Gibbs questions her.

“No. Not yet at least.”

“You know, come to think of it, you never told us why you enlisted, boss,” Tony points out.

“That’s because it’s personal,” Gibbs informs him around his food again before answering his phone that is ringing, “Gibbs.”

“You think his recruiter told him a fast one?” Kate asks Tony.

“I doubt it,” Tony answers him.

“Why?”

“Can you imagine someone lying to Gibbs and getting away with it?”

“Yeah,” Gibbs said into the phone before hanging it up and saying to us, “That’s our authorization for the building Abby thinks the sniper fired from. DiNozzo, you’re with me.”

“What about me?” Kate and I ask unison.

“No. I need to see if there’s a murderer hiding in that sack of files.”

“Gibbs, what about me?” I question her again.

“Go home and get some sleep.”

“Gibbs.”

“That’s an order,” Gibbs said while pointing at me and giving me the look that said disobeying is not an opinion.

“Sir, yes, sir,” I say with a salute.

“Good luck,” Tony says to Kate while we walk to the elevator.

“Gibbs,” I brake the silence in the elevator, “Can you give me a lift. I don’t want to or feel safe taking a cab at this time of night.

“You live in the other direction to where we are going,” Tony informs me.

“Sorry, never mind,” I say while walking out of the elevator and walk to the front door.

“Ow, sorry boss,” Tony says when Gibbs hits in on the back of the head and walks off while giving him the look that makes him head to the car and not follow Gibbs.

“Alice,” Gibbs yells while walking over to me and sees that I am shaking, “Baby, what’s wrong?”

“Nothing. Don’t you have a search warrant to use?” I ask while looking away from Gibbs.

“It can wait. What’s going on?”

“It’s stupid. I’m afraid of the dark,” I whisper in the hopes that Gibbs doesn’t hear me.

“Oh, baby. Come on, we’ll give you a lift,” Gibbs says while pulling me against his chest.

“But Tony’s right, it’s the wrong way,” I mumble against his chest while rapping my hands around his torso.

“Yours might be, but mine isn’t.”

“Gibbs, I…”

“What is it baby?” Gibbs asks when I stop talking without saying what I was going to.

“I shouldn’t still be afraid of the dark. That’s for babies.”

“Hey, it’s okay to have a fear. Not just babies, even me.”

“What are you afraid of?”

“No coffee,” Gibbs jokes making me laugh.

“I could believe that,” I whisper into his chest even though I know he is joking.

“Come on,” Gibbs says while moving one arm from around me while leading me to the car.

“Thank you Gibbs,” I say while leaning on his body.

“Wait here,” Gibbs orders Tony when we get to his house and him and I get out and walk up the drive way. Once we enter the house Gibbs leads me straight to a bedroom that looks like it is lived in but not used. “You can sleep here,” Gibbs says.
“Where is the bathroom?” I ask Gibbs while he digs in a set of draws and pulls out a pair of sweet pants and an old NIS shirt.

“Here, you can sleep in this,” Gibbs say while handing them to me and then he leads me to a door on the side of the room. When he turns the light on through the door and adds, “In here.”

“Thank you Gibbs.”

“Your welcome. And there is a new tooth brush under the sink you can us.”

“Really thank you Gibbs.”

“Good night Alice,” Gibbs say before kissing me on the forehead and leaving the room. On his way to the car he stops and locks the door for the first time in years.

I walk into the bathroom and find a clean towel and have a shower. I wash my hair with Gibbs shampoo and then I get out and get dressed in the clothe Gibbs gave me to wear. I find the toothbrush and use it before I walk to the bed and get in without turning off the bathroom light.

Gibbs get back to his house at around four am and walks straight into the master bed room where I am sound asleep. He looks at me sleeping in his bed and the light from the bathroom is making my hair look even redder then it is. He quietly go to the same draw as before and gets another set of cloth and head into the bathroom but he leaves the door open a little bit so that there is still light in the bedroom.

After his shower Gibbs walks back into the bed room with his hair still water and stops beside the door. He hastate for a second before walk around the bed and climbing in beside me.

“Hey, you’re late,” Gibbs says while walking past Tony to his desk while I walk out of the elevator from getting Abby to cover my split lip and the bruise.

“And a good morning to you, sir,” Tony says while hanging up the phone.

“Kate, got those files sorted?”

“Looks like we might have our gunny figured wrong. These aren’t complaints. They’re letters thanking him. He kept it touch with a lot of his recruits even after graduation. The middle ones are mostly bitching and moaning along the line of last night. And these are the two that stood out. This one sounded the most promising,” Kate explains while pointing out each pile before handing Gibbs a file while holding onto the second one.

“Ooh, I’ll say. This guy is threatening to cut off Alvarez’s head,” Gibbs reads off the file.

“Yeah. He’s dead. Six months ago in Iraq.”

“Well, don’t give it to Gibbs then stupid,” I tell Kate.

“This one is our best bet. Sergeant Aaron Barnes. He claims that Alvarez told him that if he signed up for a six year hitch, he’d qualify for the marine enlisted commissioning program. It turns out Burn’s high school GPA wasn’t high enough to qualify for MECP. And when he found that out, he wanted to break his contract.”

“That’s not going to happen,” Gibbs says while looking over the file.

“Yeah. And when that got shot down, he fired off a personal letter to Alvarez, promising to look the gunny up again when his contract was up.”

“That’s not exactly a death threat,” Tony states.

“When’s his contract?” I ask Kate know she would have that information.

“Well his contract’s up this year. But here’s the kicker. Two years ago he was selected for sniper school and he was so good that they brought him back as an instructor. He’s there now,” Kate informs us what she found overnight.

“Let’s roll,” Gibbs orders. We walk to the elevator while Kate and Tony have a quieted conversion.

“Adjust your mil scale. You’re shooting up slope with a variable ten knot wind! Close doesn’t count in combat, Corporal. Even a half inch off your mark, the target gets the opportunity to live and return the favour!” Barnes yells at the marine that is shooting while looking through binoculars at the target.

“Yes, sir!” the marine answers while doing what he was told.

“Sergeant Barnes?” Gibbs questions while we walk to Barnes.
“Stand by, gentlemen,” Barnes say while looking at us.  
“Special Agent Gibbs, Todd, DiNozzo, NCIS,” Gibbs explains while failing to introducing me.  
“What can I do for you, Sir?”  
“We want to talk to you about gunnery sergeant Freddy Alvarez,” Kate informs him while I pull out a notepad and start to take notes.  
“I guess he couldn’t get away with it forever,” Barnes informs us.  
“What?” Gibbs questions the marine.  
“Promising things he knew he could never deliver on, sir.”  
“The thing is, we’re not here to talk about his recruiting methods.”  
“He was killed yesterday,” Kate informs the marine.  
“Shot by a sniper,” Tony adds.  
“You think it’s me,” Barnes states, making me pull out a copy of the letter and I handed it to him, “I can’t believe he kept this letter. You’ve got to believe me, Sir. It’s not what you think.”  
“It never is,” Tony says.  
“Where were you, Sergeant, yesterday between noon and fourteen hundred?” Gibbs integrates him.  
“Individual PT, sir. I ran the loop around Lunga Reservoir,” Barnes informs us defensively.  
“Can anyone corroborate that?” Kate probes him.  
“Corporal Stenson. We work out together every Wednesday.”  
“Where’s the Corporal now?” Tony jumps in next.  
“Running a Land Nav class in the field. I can have him call you when he gets back.”  
“I’ve got a better idea. Why don’t you give me his grid coordinate,” Gibbs orders and after a heartbeat he adds, “And a map?”  
“Are you sure you know where you’re going?” Kate questions Gibbs as we walk through the wood with nothing but a map and Gibbs ability to read the map correctly.  
“I used to this for a living,” Gibbs informs her.  
“They had maps back then?” Tony asks Gibbs.  
“Tony, they have had maps all the way back to the ancient Egyptians. Do you really think Gibbs is older than them?” I question Tony.  
“Number one rule if you’re lost, you’ve got to find a mountain and shoot a back azimuth off it,” Stenson informs the two marines he is teaching.  
“Yes, sir,” the two marines answer.  
“Corporal Stenson?” Gibbs calls out to the marine when he comes into sight.  
“You two work out the next azimuth. I’ll be up with you in a minute,” Stenson informs the marines.  
“Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS.”  
“What’s up, sir? You and your people working on some land nav?”  
“Among other things. Did you PT with Sergeant Barnes yesterday afternoon?”  
“Yes, sir, every Wednesday between noon and fourteen hundred.”  
“What’d you do?” Kate questions him.  
“We um… we were running the obstacle course, ma’am.”  
“Here it is, okay? Gunny Alvarez lied to me. It pissed me off so I wrote him that stupid letter. But joining the Marine Corps is the best thing that ever happened to me,” Barnes explains to Gibbs while sweating bullet, sitting in integration.  
“It’s sixty eight degrees in here, Sergeant. Are you hot? Or do you always sweat this much?” Gibbs questions him.  
“I am not a murderer, sir.”  
“You’ll excuse me f I don’t take your word for it.”  
“My contract was up the end of this year, sir. Why would I reenlist for another six years if I hated the
“Marine Corps?”
“Maybe you just enjoy being a sniper. You get a thrill out of the fact that your target is totally unaware of your presence. Their lives in your hand. You choosing the exact moment you plan to end it. Do you think that Alvarez felt those cross hairs lining up on his chest?”
“I didn’t shoot him, sir!”
“Next time drive a little faster, Tony. I think my glands still have an ounce of adrenaline left,” Kate informs Tony while getting out of the car and slamming the door.
“Responsible crime scene investigation demands a timely arrival, Kate,” Tony answers her.
“Yeah, well it’ll help if the investigators don’t puke all over it.”
“That brings back memories,” Gibbs tells them.
“Memories of what?”
“Marriage,” Gibbs answers Kate while I shut the door Gibbs and I climbed out of.
“If marriage is like that, I am never getting married,” I state.
“Second marine recruiter was killed while Sergeant Barnes was in custody. Why are we still holding him?” Tony questions Gibbs.
“Because we can.”
“He’s not tell the truth. I just don’t know about what,” Gibbs explains to Tony.
“Well, he could have a partner. Snipers like to use spotters,” Kate theories.
“Why didn’t we see if these two shootings are even connected?” Gibbs says while a car comes to the stop at the crime scene.
“Boss, are you expecting company?” Tony asks while I grab Gibbs arm while watching a FBI agent get out of the car.
“The victim was a marine. That puts it in our jurisdiction, Agent Kramer,” Gibbs informs the FBI agent while we all stand around in the recruiting centre where the second marine was murdered.
“Maybe, but the second shooting was in Maryland which puts it across state lines and in ours,” Kramer shoots back at Gibbs.
“According to who?”
“The director of the FBI.”
“Oh, is he here somewhere?”
“Nah, Gibbs but his bitch is,” I inform Gibbs while point into agent Kramer.
“Look, if you pull your people back, I promise you’ll get copies of everything we find,” Kramer promises Gibbs while giving me a look.
“And if I don’t?” Gibbs questions the FBI agent.
“Well, I wouldn’t worry about that. You’ll be receiving a call from your director any minute now. And one more thing, agent Gibbs. Fornell warned me about you. Do not try and remove the body.”
“Hey, Gibbs you come with a warning know, you have moved up in the world. When I meet you, no one even know who you were,” I state making agent Kramer give me another look while Gibbs smirks at me for that observation.
We can get the trajectory, no problem,” Kate informs Gibbs and me when we join the circle of NCIS around the body.
“The competition’s going to be for the bullet,” Tony adds.
“I don’t think the unfortunate staff sergeant Allen is going to be of much use there. The bullet passed clean through,” Ducky informs us while looking at the poor marine that just lost his life.
“Then I suggest we help our good friends, the FBI, find it. Tony, make a hole,” Gibbs orders.
“Scalpel,” Tony holds his hand out to Ducky who gives him one.
“Kate, find the bullet.”
“I know you find the departmental turf wars as tedious as I do. People of serious intent should never allow the frivolous to deter them from the pursuit of justice, should they? Don’t you think?” Ducky rambles to the marine body.
“I’ve got the secondary bullet hole, boss!” Tony calls out to Gibbs after making the hole with the
“All right, we’ll take it from here,” Freeman informs Tony while walking up to him.

“Ah, no. I’ll wait for my boss. He’s the good looking guy with all his hair,” Tony says while having a go at Freeman’s hair that is only around the side of his hear.

“You still haven’t heard from your director yet?”

“No, until we do,” Gibbs says to Freeman while walking to stand next to me, and I am standing next to Tony making a wall of NCIS between the ‘bullet hole,’ and the FBI, “That bullet in the wall behind us belongs to NCIS.”

“Well, from where I’m standing you’re a little outnumbered.”

“Well, from where I’m standing, I’m not real worried about it.”

“All right, listen, Gibbs, I don’t have time for this bull! Will somebody please give me the damn NCIS director on the phone?”

“Well, that is not going to happen. Today is Thursday and Thursday is his golf day,” I inform the FBI agent, making his face go red and a vain in his forehead become visible to the naked eye.

“Listen, I am not fooling around anymore, Gibbs.”

“We’re not either. The man has a mean handicap,” Gibbs informs him while His phone rings, “Yeah, Gibbs. Yes, sir. Yes, sir. It won’t happen again, sir,” Gibbs says into his phone. He turns to Freeman and states, “It looks like you win this one. Don’t get used to it.”

“Don’t take it personally, Gibbs. We all have our orders.”

“Listen, when you see Fornell, you day hi for me.”

“My pleasure. You have a nice day now.”

“And tell him I said goodbye,” I inform Freeman when I see him watching Gibbs pick something up. “Hathcock,” Gibbs says to himself while we leave the scene. “Who’s Hathcock?” Kate questions Gibbs while we walk in the parking lot out front of the scene. “Carlos Hathcock,” I give Kate his full name.

“A marine sniper legend. Thirty nine confirmed kills in Vietnam,” Gibbs continues for me. “What’s that go to do with pigeon feathers?” Kate continues to question us.

“It’s not a pigeon feather,” I say to Kate while scrunching me face up in confusion at how Kate can be so ignorant.


“The V.C. nicknamed Hathcock after a small white feather he kept in the band of his hat,” Tony explains to Kate. “History Channel?”

“His biography.”

“You read his biography?”

“I watched his biography on the Biography Channel.”

“So do you think it’s somehow connected to the shooter?”

“Don’t know. If we find another one of these that match it in gunnery sergeant Alvarez’s office,” Gibbs says but leaves the end open, which we can all finish it in our head.

“We’ll strip search the roaches, boss,” Tony informs Gibbs while we all climb into the truck. Kate, Gibbs and me in the front while Tony get in the back.

“You realize what this means, if it is some kind of a calling cards?” Kate says in realization of what the killer was doing.

“Yeah. It means he likes to meet the recruiter before he kills them,” Gibbs says what we’re all thinking while leaving the scene and heading back to the NCIS building.

“The second bullet’s in way better shape than the first. Some of the rifling patterns are matching up like the Glam Slam Techno Twin. Oh, sorry! Wrong generation. Think the Andrew Sisters,” Abby says while bouncing around in front of her computer.

“Going back a little far there, Abby,” Gibbs says to her.

“So I don’t have enough to be a hundred percent certain that it’s the same gun, but I am one hundred
percent sure it’s the same model.”

“You have the shooter’s nest yet?” I question Abby.

“It looks like our shooter might be mobile. Following the trajectory in reverse, there isn’t a building or a structure that makes any sense as a shooting position. There’s only road.”

“The shooter fired from a car?” Gibbs and I ask her in surprise.

“Oh a truck or a van.”

After talking to Abby, Gibbs heads to the integration to talk to Barnes while I head to his computer to wire what we have found so far.

“We are still thinking this guy is in the military?” Kate questions Gibbs while we walk in the stairs.

“Something tells me you don’t believe it,” Gibbs states.

“Maybe it’s the profile. This feather is our shooter’s calling card. It’s like a signature.”

“But a white feather for all we know could mean he has a Forrest Gump fixation,” Tony says while thinking about it.

“Well, it doesn’t matter if other people know what the feather means. He knows. I just think this guy is living in a fantasy world, and I can’t picture him functioning in some highly organized military environment.”

“So you think he’s ex-military, like the Beltway sniper?”

“Possibly. But why target only Marine recruiters?”

“Because they turned him down,” I inform Kate and Tony.

“This guy isn’t military. He’s a wannabe,” Gibbs agrees with me while expanding on what I said.

“His profile,” Kate says while looking at us in surprise as she releases that Gibbs and I have been finishing each other’s thoughts on this case.

“How many people do the marines turn down every year?” Tony questions us.

“Thousands,” Gibbs and I say at the same time before Gibbs continues, “By the time we get a chance to check them out, this guy’s going to shoot again.”

“If he continues to his pattern, we have less than twenty four hours,” Kate says.

“Maybe it’s time we got more pro-active.”

“And our heartfelt prayers and wishes go out to the families of Gunnery sergeant Alvarez, Staff Sergeant Allen. We are continuing to work with law enforcement to bring the person or persons responsible to justice,” Dougherty said to the reports on the TV we are watching while standing in front of the first murder scene.

“Will the Marine Corps suspend recruiting?” a report asks.

“Never. Marines don’t run from danger. This recruitment office will re-open tomorrow morning, manned by one of our finest, gunnery Sergeant Thomas,” Dougherty said while introducing Gibbs.

“How do you feel about being selected for this assignment, Gunny Sergeant?” another reporter asks Gibbs.

“I wasn’t selected, sir. I volunteered,” Gibbs corrects him.

“Welcome to the Marines, Kate,” Gibbs says when he gets back to NCIS and Kate puts on her outfit for the undercover mission.

“Kate’s gonna be your C.O?” Tony questions Gibbs in surprise.

“That’s the plan.”

“But Gibbs this is a bad plan. She doesn’t even know her left from her rights and you want her to boss you around? She will say step right and get you killed,” I state while the blood leaves my face at the idea.

“I didn’t realize Kate knew so much about being a Marine,” Tony adds on.

“Kate doesn’t know squat about being in the marines. She doesn’t have to,” Gibbs informs Tony while ignoring me for the moment.

“I won’t be interacting with the recruits, Tony. I’ll just be there to focus on how they interact with Gibbs. One of them might be our sniper,” Kate informs Tony.
“You’re not the only one around here who knows how to profile,” Tony jealousy informs Kate. “Maybe. But with that haircut, you wouldn’t pass for a ROTC student.” “The vest is going to hardly even show underneath this. You need your ribbons. What do we hear back from the FBI?” Gibbs cuts in before Tony and Kate can go at it anymore. “Beside Agent Freeman’s extreme dislike for you? Un,” Tony informs Gibbs before stopping and then starting again, “They’ll cooperate, but he’s not too keen on the visible part.” “Our shooter isn’t a moron. If he doesn’t see police and FBI presence in the neighbourhood, he’s going to think something’s wrong.” “I have a problem with that part too, Boss. That’s the point of setting a trap if he knows about it?” “Part of a sniper’s mission is to infiltrate enemy territory. Our guy wants to prove himself, validate his skills. He’s not going to pass up an opportunity like this,” Kate explains to Tony. “What if he succeeds?” “He won’t,” Gibbs cuts in. “Don’t take this the wrong way, but… you actually make that look good,” Tony has the guts to say to Kate. “Thanks. Have you tried yours on yet?” Kate questions Tony. “ Tried what?” “Gibbs said you’d be in uniform too.” “He did?” “Mm-hmmm.”

Kyle Hendricks. Twenty two. Rejected by Sergeant Gordon Mackenzie, eleven August, two thousand two, at the Rockville recruiting centre. Failed the personality profile assessment. Sociopathic tendencies with anti-social behaviour. His stated goal for joining the Marine Corps, he wanted to be a marine sniper,” I read off Gibbs computer, the file on the murderer. “Yeah, will you’ve got to admit, he was one hell of a marksman. DiNozzo, Captain,” Gibbs says while nodding to Tony and Kate while moving me out of his chair so he can sit down. “So what was it like?” Tony questions Kate while Gibbs signs the report I have written while they were sitting waiting for Gibbs to die. “What like?” Kate questions Tony in return. “Being his superior officer,” Tony said while nodding to Gibbs who is listening in. “You mean, did I get to boss him around? Make him salute me? Call me ma’am?” “Basically.” “It was great!” “You’re lying.” “Am I? Abby said you looked really good in a uniform too.” “Did she?” “Yeah. She said you’d fit right in with a biker boy, and an Indian chief, a cowboy and all the other macho, macho men!” Kate says while Tony walks over to the elevator making herself laugh.
“It’s my sister’s number. I always use her as my emergency contact,” Kate says into her phone while I clean out Gibbs mail box on his computer and Tony just listens in, “No, she lives in Miami. What difference does it make if she’s local or not? Well, no, of course… I could… I could get the number of somebody in town. It’s just that… I’ll have to call them first to make sure it’s all right. Fine, I’ll call you back.”

“I’ll be your emergency contact,” Tony informs Kate when she hangs up the phone.

“Thanks, I’ll get somebody else.”

“What’s wrong with me?”

“Where do I start?”

“They never call. They just need a number,” Tony says while throwing a scrunched up paper into the bin over his should without look.

“How do you do that?”

“First team varsity, Ohio State. So what do you say?”

“Fine. Just don’t make a big deal out of it.”

“Great! So what are my responsibilities? Are there any financial ramifications? Do I need to give blood if you get hurt?”

“See? This is what I was taking about making a big deal out of it.”

“Maybe I should go by your house and check out the floor plan,” Tony rambles over Kate.

“Oh, forget it! Forget it, okay? I’ll just um,” Kate tells him while closing her draw, “I’ll ask Abby.”

“Suit yourself.”

“Whoa! Are you guys Libras?” Abby asks while holding a newspaper.

“No,” Kate and Tony answer together in confusion.

“I don’t know,” I inform Abby when she just keeps staring at me.

“They are so screwed this week!” Abby exclaims before walking way.

“Why don’t you ask Gibbs?” I question Kate while moving back in the chair to look at her over the computer.

“Maybe I will,” Kate say as Gibbs walks towards us and she quietly asks us, “Why is he carrying two cups of coffee today?”

“I don’t know, and I don’t want to know. But it probably has something to do with one of his ex-wives,” Tony answers her while moving back to his own desk.

“Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone while putting both coffees on the desk and taking notes while listening, “I understand a naval officer was killed here last night.”

“I don’t know, and I don’t want to know. But it probably has something to do with one of his ex-wives,” Tony answers her while moving back to his own desk.

“Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone while putting both coffees on the desk and taking notes while listening, “Have a possible execution-style murder of a Navy Lieutenant Commander in Grayson County. Let’s call Ducky.”

“You know I have call waiting. For emergencies. I don’t think Gibbs even knows what call waiting is,” Tony inform Kate while grabbing his gear and walking to the elevator.

“Gibbs, NCIS” Gibbs says when we get to the crime scene and see the local sheriff there.

“Hello Gibbs, NCIS. You got a first name?” Sheriff Dupray asks Gibbs while checking him out.

“Jethro,” Gibbs answers.

“Your parents had a sense of humour. Who’s the rest of your posse?”

“Special Agent Todd, DiNozzo. Our M.E. Doctor Mallard. Alice.”

“What can I do for you?”

“I understand a naval officer was killed here last night.”

“That’s right.”

“If it’s all the same to you, Sheriff…”


“…Since the victim was a naval officer, we’d like to take over the investigation,” Gibbs continues without though or changing what he said.
“Well it isn’t all the same to me, Jethro. The voters of Grayson County didn’t elect me sheriff so I could cede jurisdiction to some out-of-towners – no matter how good looking one of them might be.”
“We’ll share jurisdiction.”
“A murder on a state road in my country? I don’t think so.”
“With all due respect, Sheriff…”
“Charlie.”
“…The forensic resource of NCIS dwarf those of Grayson County.”
“Well, I’ll tell you what. I’ll handle the local investigation; you can have custody of the physical evidence for forensic purposes and do the on-base investigation. But any prosecution will take place in Grayson County, everything runs through me, no exceptions, and I get full credit. It’s an election year.”
“What have you got?” Gibbs question the sheriff while gently putting his hand on my lower back and leads me to follow the sheriff down to the body.
“Looks like commander Julius got a flat, pull over to fix it, somebody came along robbed him and killed him. No clothes, no wallet, no watch. We traced him through the car registration.”
“How can he have a wallet, if he doesn’t have clothe? Meaning he has no pockets,” I ask the sheriff.
“Kate, photos. Tony, laser and sketch,” Gibbs orders while looking down at the poor naval officer who has a bullet in his head and his hands tied behind his back.
“This reminds me of the tale of the traveller who was beaten and left by the highway,” Ducky says to everyone.
“How so?” Sheriff Dupray questions Ducky.
“Oh, a man from Samaria come by. Yes, he saw the poor fellow, picked him up, and carried him in his arms to an inn. He bathed his wounds, bandaged him and left money to feed him. This was unusual because the Samarians were considered outcasts and of low moral fibre. Yeah, but from then on he’s been known as the ‘good Samaritan.’”
“Man you can talk.”
“Perhaps over dinner?”
“You’re cute. You’ve got no chance, but you’re cute.”
“Don’t be too swift in your dismissal, Charlie. Destiny has brought us together.”
“You might want to check those tarot cards one more time.”
“This Samaritan wasn’t one of the good ones, was he, my friend?” Ducky asks the dead body.
“What have you got, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky to get the show on the road.
“Single gunshot to the back. One, two… oh, no exit wound. Based on the blood splatter, I’d say he was shot where he dropped.”
“Shell casings?” I asks.
“None that we could find. We set up grids and went over each one using a metal detector. Found zip,” Sheriff Dupray answers me.
“That’s odd,” Ducky says while looking over the body.
“What?” Gibbs questions him.
“His hands were bound after he died. If they were tied before he was killed, it would’ve restricted circulation and the blood would have pooled and been unable to escape.”
“Making his hands redder than the rest of his body,” I realise what he is saying.
“Precisely.”
“Oh, Jethro, you’re really got to have some patience,” Ducky said while, Gibbs, Ducky and I walk way leaving the sheriff talking to Kate about something.
“I saw a car with its trunk up so I pulled over. Didn’t know I’d be rolling into a crime scene. What’s that cologne you’re wearing?” Sheriff Dupray questions Gibbs in a poor attending to flirt with him, while kneeling down between Gibbs and me where we are looking at the tire tracks.
“Not wearing any,” Gibbs answers her without looking up.
“Oh, that’s me. New perfume. You like?” Sheriff Dupray say while holding her hand out for Gibbs to smell after she smelted it herself.
“Smells like Cassidy,” I inform her making Gibbs laugh at me.
“You still hating on her? Got a tow truck we can borrow?” Gibbs questions the sheriff.
“Sure, doll,” sheriff Dupray asks while giving me and Gibbs a look.
“Don’t say it, DiNozzo,” Gibbs orders when the sheriff walks away.
“I wasn’t going to say anything,” Tony says to Gibbs while photographing the tire tracks.
“Don’t think it,” I add on to the end.
“Too late.”

When we get to Oceana, I want you to search Julius’ apartment,” Gibbs orders.
“What are we looking for?” Tony questions Gibbs.
“Motive to kill him.”
“You don’t think it was a crime of opportunity?” Kate questions Gibbs in surprise.
“His hands were tied after he was killed,” I remind her what Ducky said.
“Well maybe it was part of the killer’s ritual.”
“Kate, that’s why we’re going to Oceana,” Gibbs informs her.
“Jethro!” Sheriff Dupray yells while running up to us.
“Your fans back,” I say to Gibbs when turn and see her.
“I need to know how to get hold of you.”
“The number’s on the card I gave you,” Gibbs informs her while hiding a smile at what I said.
“What about after hours?”
“Uh… they can find me.”
“Is this NCIS’s idea of cooperation?” Sheriff Dupray asks making Gibbs write his number for her.
“How did he die?” Green questions us when we get to the medical clinic where our victim worked.
“He was shot in the back. Any idea what he was doing out there?” Gibbs answers, while asking his own question.
“His sister lives in Kentucky. He might have been on his way home from a visit.”
“How long had he been stationed here?” I probe Green.
“About five years. Been with the navy almost fifteen years. It was his life.”
“Never married?” Gibbs asks.
“Well, if he was it was before he arrived here.”
“How well did you know him?” I cut in again.
“Not very.”
“You’re his commanding officer,” Gibbs reminds him.
“Commander Julius was a bit of an odd duck, if you know what I mean.”
“I don’t,” Gibbs and I say together.
“He was competent dentist, but he wasn’t one of the boys.”
“Didn’t like to go out and hoist a few, huh?” Gibbs asks him.
“Exactly. He would rather sit in front of a computer screen surfing for collectibles.”
“What kind?” I ask him.
“Know anybody who had a grudge against him?” Gibbs asks him.
“Somebody’s popular,” Kate states while looking at all the messages on Tony’s desk in the squad room.
“Not me. Clerk screwed up again. And they seem to be from Sheriff Dupray,” Tony says while giving them to Gibbs who hands them to me without reading it.
“Thought you gave her your cell.”
“Guess I forgot to turn it on,” Gibbs tells her without a looking at her.
“What does she want?” Tony questions Gibbs because he failed to read the notes.
“She wants to video conference,” I tell them.
“What can I do for you, Sheriff?” Gibbs said to the sheriff while standing in MTAC.
“Jethro, if you’re not going to call me Charlie, we’re going to have a difficult time working together,” Sheriff Dupray says to Gibbs.
“Okay, Charlie,” Gibbs says with a smile.
“There was a murder two counties over, very similar to Commander Julius. In fact, almost exactly the same.”
“How so?” I ask the sheriff.
“The victim was found off the side of a country road, nude, bound, one gunshot in the back, no shell casings found.”
“Who was the victim?” Gibbs takes over for me again.
“A David Truly. He wasn’t in the navy, but he was a civilian employee at naval air station Oceana. I think we’ve got a serial killer on our hands.”
“This reminds me of a case I worked once. Guy hated mailmen,” Tony rambles once the video call is finished.
“Letter carrier,” Kate corrects Tony on what they are called.
“What?”
“They’re called letter carriers, not mailmen.”
“Since when?”
“I don’t think there was a specific date, Tony. It just kind of evolved.”
“Is this case in any way relevant to our case?” Gibbs cut them in.

“If the sheriff is right, we need to figure out how the killer is choosing his targets,” Gibbs said when we get into the stairs.
“How does he know the cars that stop are going to be navy connected?” Kate questions Gibbs.
“Maybe he doesn’t. Maybe if someone pulls over who’s not navy, he just waves them on.”
“Lot of east-west highways in Southern Virginia Beach. It makes sense a lot of people on them will be navy,” Tony theories.
“Get a hold of Truly’s personnel records. See if there’s any connection between him and Commander Julius’ C.O.”
“On it.”
“I know. You’re going to ask me to call the LEOs in the other county and have them ship over the evidence,” Kate states.
“I wasn’t going to ask,” Gibbs informs her.
“What about me, Daddy?” I ask Gibbs making Kate and Tony come to a complete stop and stare at us in confusion.
“Get a caf-pow and talk to Abby.”
“Tony gets personnel records and Kate gets LEO’s but I only get Abby. That’s boring.”
“Go.”
“Sir, yes sir.”
“Hey, how you doing?” I ask Abby when I walk into the NCIS garage carrying the caf-pow.
“Is that for me?” Abby questions me while filling the tire with air.
“Nope, it is for Gibbs.”
“I got nothing yet on what Ducky has given me. You know I hear a rumour that Gibbs is your father.”
“Yeah, I heard that too.”
“Kate said you are even calling him ‘daddy.’ Is that true?”
“Never.”
“Ha. So I hear your birthday is coming up soon. What are you going to do for it?”
“Get another tatt.”
“Can I see the one you already have?”
“Nope.”

“Why not?”

“Let’s put it this way. Where it is, it’s hidden when I were my bikini.”

“Find anything, Abby?” Gibbs asks Abby making the two of us jump in surprise.

“How long have you been here?” I demand of Gibbs with a big blush on my cheeks and down under the shirt I am wearing that gives a hint at cleavage but doesn’t show anything.

“This is the left rear tire off Commander Julius’ car. Notice anything unusual?” Abby asks Gibbs while looking at the tire herself.

“It’s inflated?” Gibbs asks while walking up behind me and whispering in e ear, “Long enough to know you are thinking of getting another tatt.”

“Is that a guess? Or do you actually know where I’m going with this.”

“What do you think?”

“Well, I don’t know. That’s why I asked you.”

“Why don’t you just tell me?”

“So you don’t know.”

“I want to make sure you know.”

“Hmm.”

“Hmm.”

“We should play poker some time.”

“Yeah, we should.”

“According to Sheriff Dupray’s report, when she got to the scene the tire was flat.”

“Only on the bottom,” I inform Abby.

“But I had no problem filing it.”

“Sure it’s not a slow leak?” Gibbs questions Abby.

“And the first time I had it submerged in water. There were no bubbles. There was nothing wrong with this tire,” Abby continues while giving me a smile.

“Somebody let the air out to make it look flat,” Gibbs and I say in unison.

“The killer went to a lot of trouble to make a crime scene look like something else.”

“Any luck with the tire track?” Gibbs asks Abby.

“That depends on your definition of luck.”

“You’re particularly feisty today.”

“Thanks for noticing. I ran the track through the tread assistant database. The CD-ROM has over ten thousand tire tacks for comparison. It’s great for parties. On top is the partial we cast at the scene.”

“You matched them?” I ask Abby while trying to step away from Gibbs but he holds me in place.

“I did. Here’s the bad news. This particular brand is like the prom queen of tires. It’s very cool. It fits all kinds of mid-size cars and SUVs. I hate getting behind SUVs. You can’t see anything.”

“My best friend drives an SUV.”

“Do you have a list of the models that use that tires?” Gibbs asks while gently pinching my hip for getting off topic.

“It’s in your email. And I included the tire distributors in the Virginia Beach area that sell that brand. So Julius’ prints are all over the car as you would expect. I did find some unidentified prints on the hood,” Abby explains to Gibbs.

“Did you run them through…?”

“Run them through AFIS?” Abby and Gibbs finish.

“Feisty and psychic,” Gibbs says with a smile.

“It’s a killer combination. I didn’t get any hits on the prints. The interior is clean – there’s no blood, there’s no bodily fluid. But I did find something peculiar on the trunk lock,” Abby continues.

“Corn starch.”

“Ducky. Hmm. There’s just no way that this was a crime of opportunity. Whoever pulled it off put a lot of thought into it.”
holding an arm full of files and photos, in civilian clothing.
“Right here,” Gibbs said while walking into the bullpen and to his desk with me following him over.
“Surprised to see me?”
“Oh, yeah. Yeah. Surprised is one word that does come to mind.”
“Case files and photos from the Halifax County murder,” she explains while holding them out for
Gibbs to see.
“I appreciate that,” Gibbs says while grabbing the files and handing them to me.
“Jethro, I think you owe me a dinner.
“Have you always been so shy?”
“Well, Jethro, there are two kinds of people in this world. The one who go after what they want, and
everybody else. Where are we going?”
“The cafeteria,” Gibbs say while signing to me, asking ‘what do you want me to bring you back?’
“Chocolate milk and some fruit, please,’ I signing back.

Do you have something to say?” Gibbs questions Tony and Kate on return from the cafeteria.
“No,” they answer in unison.
“What do we got here?”
“Well, these photos are almost carbon copied of the ones I took in Grayson County. Charlie put
together a profile of the killer,” Kate informs Gibbs.
“White male, age twenty five to thirty four, of at least average intelligence, possible a military
background,” Tony continues.
“Also makes reference to a sub-type of serial killer, the mission-oriented type. He seeks out a
specific group that he believes the world would better without.”
“Don’t narrow it down much,” Gibbs and I state.
“They also recovered a slug. Nine millimetre point,” Kate continues while giving us a look again for
talking at the same time.
“What’s the condition?” Gibbs questions her.
“It’s too damaged to try and match.”
“Does it say anything in there about the bullet having six sharp claws?”
“No, but they don’t have access to the equipment that we do. Abby might have better luck.”
“Here’s something you don’t read every day. One of the patrolmen noticed a wet patch of ground.
Someone took a whiz on the side of the road,” Tony says while reading the report.
“While they were waiting for the car to come along,” I thought out loud.
“They dug up the whole patch, sealed it, tagged it and sent it DNA analysis.”
“And?” Gibbs asks him.
“Hasn’t been tested yet because of the backlog at the state lab.”
“Get them to send it to Abby. And remember…”
“Two killing don’t make a serial killer,” I cut Gibbs off making the blood run from my face as I have
a scary thought, “But one more while.”

Z-four. Nice. Three point oh litter, two hundred and twenty five horse power, dual overhead cam.
Twenty four valve in line, six cylinder engine, double-VANOS variable A-valve timing. Oh, I love
cars!” Tony exclaims while looking over the newest victim’s car.
“There’s no flat. All the other victims’ cars had flat tires,” Kate comments.
“It wouldn’t matter. She’s got run-flat tires. They come standard.”
“Hey Charlie. Thanks for the call,” Gibbs said while leading me over to the sheriff.
“My pleasure, Jethro,” sheriff Dupray says while trying to flirt with Gibbs again.
“What do we got here?”
“A motorist called nine one one. Said they saw a car pulled off the side of the road with the
emergency flashers on. They sent a patrolman. This is what he found.”
“Victim been I.D.ed?” I question the sheriff.
“Lieutenant James Seeger. Aviator at Oceana.”
“Sure looks like the work of our guy,” Kate says while looking at the victim.
“Well, I beg to differ, Kate. This young man was killed between two and three yesterday afternoon. The body has double lividity. The blood settles twice,” Ducky informs Kate while looking at the body.
“He was killed someplace else and dumped here,” Gibbs and I interpret what Ducky is saying.
“Precisely.”
“Copycat?” Tony asks us.
“Well, the details have all been in the press. They match in almost every respect. It’s nearly impossible to come to any other conclusion,” Ducky declares.
“That means we have two killers on the loose,” Kate states.
“…Three,” Ducky finishes as we all walk through the field.
“I think we’re looking for a woman,” Gibbs informs us.
“Female serial killer goes against the odds. But not unheard of,” Tony adds.
“Most men prefer hands-on killing…”
“Strangulation, stabbing. Women prefer hands-off killing,” I finish for Gibbs making the sheriff give me annoyed look.
“Like these,” Kate realise.
“Women are meticulous about leaving the crime scene free of material evidence,” Gibbs continues to explain.
“Which would account for why we found no shell casings or fingerprints,” Sheriff Dupray realises what we are getting at.
“What would cause a man to pull over on a dark road at night?” I question everyone.
“Damsel in distress,” Kate answers me.
“Exactly,” Gibbs said while wrapping an arm around my waist.
“Handsome and smart,” Sheriff Dupray attempts to flirt with Gibbs again.
“I think our answer is in Oceana. Go through base records for any disgruntled civilian employees, dishonourable discharge, anybody with a chip on their shoulder.”
“What are you going to do?” Kate questions Gibbs.
“I’m going to talk to Lieutenant Seeger’s RIO.”
“Can I ask you a question, Gibbs?”
“Is this one of those questions where it’s not going to matter if I say no?”
“Yes,” I answer him.
“I was just wondering if there was any rhyme or reason behind how you divide up assignments,” Kate continues to questions Gibbs while ignoring me which makes me poke her in the ribs.
“Yeah,” Gibbs answers her without telling her how.
“Jimmy liked to take his Z-Four up to the Blue Ridge Parkway, drop the top, crank up some country tunes, and just whoppin’ it out,” Wallace informs us with a laugh when we get to the naval air station.
“Something funny about that?” Gibbs questions Wallace.
“I hate country music. We were always arguing about that. Sometime he’d take his Fat boy up there.”
“His what?” I asks in confusion.
“His Harley. That was Jimmy, you know. Fast car, fast jets…”
“The need for speed,” Gibbs cuts him off.
“Exactly. He had a bad boy vibe. That was part of his appeal.”
“When was the last time you saw him?” I question him.
“Two days ago. We were doing night F-C-L-P.”
“Yeah, I read his service records. His fit-reps were all overstanding,” Gibbs states.
“He was a helluva pilot.”
“Do you know anybody who would want to kill him?” I asks.
“His wife.”
“Do you want to take a minute to think about that?” Gibbs asks when Wallace answers almost before I finish the question.
“Don’t need to.”
“Any specific reason?” I ask him.
“There’s a laundry list. At the top, they’re going through a particularly nasty divorce. I guess I should say they were going through a divorce.”
“How nasty was it?” Gibbs questions him.
“Mutual restraining orders, yelling and screaming, each one accusing the other of cheating.”
“Any truth to that?”
“I can’t speak for Laura. Jimmy was a man’s man. He loved the ladies and the ladies loved him. But I never saw him cross the line, and I think he would’ve told me if he did.”
“Because he told you everything.”
“And I told him everything. When you trust your life to someone, literally, you usually don’t keep any secrets.”
“Normally, when someone kills their spouse, there’s a financial upside.”
“Did Jimmy have a second job?” I take over for Gibbs.
“No. he had a very successful grandfather. He was the original U.S. importer of Swiss army knives. Made some serious coin,” Wallace informs us.
“Jimmy was the beneficiary?” Gibbs questions him in surprise.
“Along with his brother and sister.”
“How well did you know the wife?” I ask him.
“Well enough to know she’s crazy.”
“How crazy?” Gibbs probes.
“She hired a Haitian priest to put a curse on Jimmy.”
“When was the last time Jimmy saw her?” I inquire of him.
“About a month ago, I think. They did most of their talking through lawyers. You know that song, ‘thin line between love and hate?’”
“Nope,” Gibbs answers him.
“Doesn’t matter, the title kind of says it all. Whoever wrote that had Jimmy and Laura in mind.”
“Laura Seeger?” Gibbs questions when the door opens after I knock on it.
“That’s me,” Laura answers us while in the back there are dogs barking.
“NCIS. Special Agent Jethro Gibbs. Special Agent Katelyn Todd. Miss Alice Todd. Do you have a minute?”
“Sure. Come on in,” Laura answers him while leading us into the living room. “His death hit me hard. Much harder than I imagined.”
“Giving the tone of your divorce proceeding, I would guess much harder than anyone imagined,” I say to her.
“I may not have been in love with Timmy anymore, but I still loved him.”
“Is that why you hired a Haitian priest to put a curse on him?” Gibbs asks her.
“I see you’ve been talking to Lieutenant Wallace.”
“Is it true?” Kate questions her.
“I told him that but it wasn’t true.”
“Why tell him that then?” I ask in confusion.
“Jimmy’s lawyers were playing hardball. It was gamesmanship on my part.”
“When you were together, did you get along?” Kate asks her.
“We fought like cats and dogs from day one. It was part of the appeal. There was always a certain energy, a certain juice between us,” Laura answers while laughing at the very questioned.
“What went wrong?”
“We grew apart. I know it sounds like a cliché, but that’s what happened. It got to a point where Jimmy would rather spend time out back in his woodshop than with me.”
“Did anyone else fill the void?” Gibbs asks her.
“If you’re asking me if I had an affair, the answers is no. Can we cut to the chase?”
“Yeah. By all means.”
“I’ve read enough books, watched enough T.V. to know that when a husband is killed under
suspicions circumstances, the wife is the first suspect. So please don’t feel like you need to beat
around the bush. Ask me what you came to ask me. I have nothing to hide.”
“Did you kill your husband?” I ask her without a minute thought.
“No, I didn’t.”
“Where were you yesterday afternoon?” Kate requests of her.
“Oh, I had a half dozen errands to run; dry cleaners, bank, supermarket, hardware store. I can give
you a list with the approximate time.”
“Would you be willing to give us a DNA sample?” Gibbs asks her.
“Absolutely.”

“Hey, that’s a Yogi Berra quote,” Tony exclaims.
“The cartoon character?” Kate asks Tony.
“Not Yogi bear, Yogi Berra.
“Well, judging by your reaction, he either a sports person or a bouncer at a strip club.”
“Gentlemen’s club.”
“This autopsy give us anything the other one didn’t?” Gibbs asks Ducky to get back on topic.
“Un,” Ducky thinks for a moment before adding, “The bullet was in better shape. And I noticed
something peculiar in his nose so I did a swab.”
“A saw, Duck? Kind of old school, isn’t it?”
“Oh, I just go where the evidence takes me. I recall a case in my early career, before we had the
benefit of all this marvellous technology. A young man, barely twenty old, he had jelly from a donut
on his face…”
“Ducky?”
“Yes?”
“What did you find in his nose?” I ask him before adding, “There’s something I never thought I
would say and I hope never to again.”
“Un… cellulosic fibre, lignin…”
“Wood,” Gibbs cuts Ducky off again.
“Well, sawdust to be precise.”
“Hey boss, don’t you have some kind of weird thing about women and sawdust?” Tony has the balls
to say making Gibbs give him, his signor look that says ‘if you finish that sentence I will kill you’
making Tony adds quickly, “I don’t think it’s weird.”
“Laura Seeger said that her husband had a wood shop out back,” I remember.
“Yeah, well she also said he hadn’t used it in a month. I mean, it wouldn’t still be there in his nose
after a month, would it, Ducky?” Gibbs asks.
“No, that was recent,” Ducky answers him.
“Well, he could’ve been woodworking somewhere else,” Tony informs us.
“Yeah, he could’ve,” Gibbs says but doesn’t sound like he believes it.
“Something else showed up on the swab. A dog’s hair,” Ducky adds.
“Laura Seeger had two dogs in the back. But she seems to have a solid alibi,” Kate informs us what
she has.
“One of her errands was to the bank. Charlie could get us the surveillance tapes. They’d all be timed
stamped,” Gibbs states.
“Yeah, but if she was guilty, why would she just offer up her DNA so freely?”
“Because she didn’t know we had something to match it to.”
“Oh, Gibbs! Don’t your momma teach you not to sneak up on people?” Abby asks Gibbs while slapping his chest after he walks up behind her and blows on the back of her neck.

“Obviously not,” Gibbs says with a smirk.

“An ex-boyfriend snuck up on me once, and he was walking funny for a week. Or should I say, funnier.”

“What do you got for me, Ab?”

“If it’s what I think it is, something is going to rock your world.”

“Well, don’t keep me in suspense.”

“I just need a minute and,” Abby says while typing on her computer before saying, “Ha!”

“That’s a match.”

“That’s right. Ranger Talon.”

“This was supposed to rock my world?”

“Pay attention, class. The left bullet Ducky pulled from Commander Wade Julius. The right bullet was recovered not from David Truly, the victim from two counties over, but from victim number three, Lieutenant Seeger. Now would anyone like to tell the class what this means?”

“Are there a copycat murder?” Tony questions us when we inform them just that.

“No. all three were committed by the same person,” Gibbs answers him.

“We matched the bullets from Julius to Seeger,” Abby informs him.

“Wait, that doesn’t make any sense. Why was Seeger killed somewhere else and then dumped if he wasn’t a copycat?” Tony asks what we are all think.

“Do you think Laura Seeger could have randomly killed two people to make it look like a serial killer in order to cover up killing her husband?” Kate asks.

“Yes. Two. Or three,” Gibbs answers hr making the blood run out of my face at the very thought.

“How she’s kill again to keep up the serial killer ruse?”

“Yeah, sure,” Gibbs says while wrapping an arm around my waist and pulling me against his side.

“Ice cold,” Abby exclaims.

“Ice cold,” Tony agrees with her.

“How are we doing on the DNA sample?” Gibbs gets us back on topic.

“I just got it two hours ago,” Abby alleges to him.

“And?” Gibbs asks her while running a hand through my hair.

“And you can’t rush science, Gibbs. You can yell at it and scream at it, but you can’t rush it.”

“How long until you have something, Abby?”

“Bare minimum – eighteen hours.”

“Okay, let’s get this party started. They had two different cameras in the main lobby. I figure you might be able to doctor one, but not both,” Sheriff Dupray say to us when she brings the bank videos.

“Have you looked at ‘em?” Gibbs say to us while grabbing them and throwing them to Tony to play on the plasma screen.

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“I can’t watch movies alone. I stopped by blockbuster in case those are boring. Got ‘sleepless in Seattle.’”

“Well, let’s see if Laura Seeger’s alibi holds up.”

“Is that her?” Sheriff Dupray ask us when the video starts.

“Yes.”

“I don’t like her shoes.”

“Two thirty three p.m.,” I say while watching the video.

“Ducky said the time of death was what, between two and three?” Kate asks.

“She’s in the bank right in the middle of it,” Gibbs agrees with her.

“It’s exactly when she says she was there,” I finish for him while looking at the video.

“Guess that means she’s got an alibi. She couldn’t have gotten from the bank to the murder site that quickly. No way she could be our killer,” Sheriff Dupray say to us while the video is turned off.
“Obviously, Laura Seeger couldn’t have done it,” Kate says once we have watched both videos. “Two different angles, both of them lock. She entered the bank at two thirty three p.m. She left at two forty p.m.” Tony says.

“Only one thing we can do. Go over everything again from the beginning,” Gibbs orders from where he is sitting at his desk.

“Like my daddy always said, every path has its puddles,” Sheriff Dupray says. “Do you know what kind of video system the bank uses?” I ask the sheriff.

“No, why?”

“Because if it’s a central system, all the time stamps would be the same. You’d just have to change one,” Gibbs explains to her.

“You think she had somebody inside the bank?” Kate asks Gibbs in surprise.

“How hard is it for an attractive woman to get a guy to do what she wants?”

“Oh, that’s easy!” Kate answers the rhetorical question.

“Oh, it happens every day!” Sheriff Dupray answers at the same time.

“Lady’s,” Tony says before adding, “That was a rhetorical question.”

“Charlie, can you check out the bank for me?” Gibbs asks her.

“Yeah, sir,” Sheriff Dupray answers him.

“We also need to re-verify all the stops she made when she was running her errands.”

“We need to find the murder weapon and tie it to Seeger.”

“Yeah. I checked the federal registry, I checked gun purchase records in the surrounding five states,” Tony informs us.

“Well then check ten! Get me a sales receipt on the ammo. Ranger Talon is an uncommon bullet.”

“I’ll do a full background on her,” Kate informs Gibbs what she is going to do.

“Start with her parents and work forward until today,” Gibbs orders and when no one moves her asks, “What are you waiting for?”

“You finished with these tapes?” Sheriff Dupray questions Gibbs.

“I want to show them to Abby, see if the shadows are consistent with the time stamp,” Gibbs says while holding the two tapes.

“I’ll tell ya, Jethro, I’d hate to be on the wrong side of the law with you.”

“Special Agent Gibbs. This must be the follow-up visit where you have a few more questions,” Laura says when she opens the door. “Can I come in?” Gibbs asks her without commenting on her guess of why we are here.

“Of course,” Laura says while moving out of the door way so we can come in to the living room. “We ran down all your errands,” Gibbs informs her.

“Any problems?”

“Nope. No, in fact, if anything it was a little too neat,” I informs her.

“Look around. It’s pretty spotless, huh? One of my qualities, for better or worse, is that I’m very organized. Of course, Jimmy had another word for it.”

“Oh, I’m sure he did,” Gibbs says with a small smile.

“It would make him mental. Jimmy was the kind of guy who would walk into a room, drop whatever he was carrying, and then leave a trail of clothes leading to the kitchen.”

“Is that one of the things you fought about?” I ask her.

“It’s one of the many.”

“We did an autopsy on your husband,” Gibbs informs her.

“I assume that’s standard.”

“Mm-hmm. Yeah, it is. What we found wasn’t.”

“Do you want me to guess?”

“We found something unusual in his nose. We did a swab.”

“We found two things: sawdust and dog hair,” I continue for Gibbs.

“Okay,” Laura says in confusion.
“You have a wood ship out back, right?” Gibbs questions her.

“Yeah, I told you that.”

“And from the sound of it a dog or two?” I continue to ask her.

“Oh! You think Jimmy was here recently, even though I told you he hadn’t been here in a month.”

“You can see why,” Gibbs states.

“I can,” Laura said before adding after a heartbeat, “How did I do?”

“What do you mean?”

“You obviously told me that to see my reaction. Look, as I said before, I have nothing to hide. I dint kill my husband. I gave you my DNA. I don’t know what more you want from me. That should be enough to clear me, shouldn’t it? Unless… unless you have nothing to match it to and asking me was another test.”

“I got your nine one one, Abs. what’s up?” Gibbs ask Abby when we get into the lab.

“Are you ready to have your world rocked again?” Abby ask Gibbs with a big smile on her face.

“I’m barely over the first time.”

“O ran Laura Seeger’s DNA swab and I got the DNA results back from the urine sample taken at the first crime scene.”

“And?” I ask Abby.

“How about a drum roll?”

“Abby?” Gibbs says.

“Okay, forget the drum roll. Although it would have been nice.”

“Hey!”

“The DNA matched.”

“Laura Seeger has an ironclad alibi.”

“I know.”

“How is it possible they could match?” I ask in confusion.

“They can’t, but they do.”

“We’ve got a warrant to search your house,” Gibbs informs Laura at night when we are looking.

“I don’t understand. You said that my alibi checked out,” Laura exclaims.

“It did.”

“For the murder of your husband,” I finish for Gibbs when he stops for a moment.

“This warrant is based on the murder of David Truly,” Tony explains her.

“I don’t even know who that is!” Laura exclaims while closing the door.

“David Truly was killed on U.S. highway Fifty Eight. You DNA was found at the crime scene,” Sheriff Dupray informs her next.

“That’s impossible.”

“Not according to the lab results,” Kate tells her.

“What DNA did you find?”

“Well, it seems that while you were waiting for a car to come along, you had to answer nature’s call,” Tony conveys to her next.

“Women don’t urinate on the side of the road! Do they, Agent Todd?”

“I don’t,” Kate tells her but when she looks at the sheriff for an answer the sheriff just shrugs her shoulders with a guilty look that says she does.

“Someone’s setting me up.”

“So you’re saying someone stole your piss while your head was turned?” I ask her.

“Yes!”

“And how exactly would they do that?” Tony ask her.

“I’ve given two urine samples in the last month at Oceana Base Clinic. Once for my annual physical and once because Jimmy’s lawyers accused me of using drugs.”

“Well, you shouldn’t have told them you got a Haitian priest to put a course on him then,” I inform her.
“You know that’s easy to check out,” Kate informs her while giving me a look.
“Check it out. I want you to,” Laura challenge us.
“Who’s your doctor?” Gibbs ask her.
“Commander Margaret Green.”
“You neglected to tell me Lieutenant Seeger had filed a formal grievance against you,” Gibbs says to
Green when we come back to question her again in the clinic.
“I don’t think it was germane,” Green informs us.
“A man has been murdered, you had a grudge, and you didn’t think it was germane,” I ask her in
fake confusion.
“I’m a professional, agent Gibbs. I didn’t let his compliant colour my behaviour.”
“Maybe you should have. According to the complaint you were sexually harassing Lieutenant
Seeger,” Gibbs states.
“Lieutenant Seeger and I differed in our interpretation of the event that transpired.”
“What did the review board have to say?” I ask her.
“The hearing hadn’t been held.”
“The hearing hadn’t been held. Before it could be, Lieutenant Seeger was killed,” Gibbs says.
“Are you trying to insinuate something, Agent Gibbs?”
“I don’t insinuate, Commander.”
“Did you treat Lieutenant Seeger’s wife?” I ask before Gibbs can piss her off to much.
“I treat a lot of people’s wives,” Green answers without answering.
“Including Lieutenant Seeger’s”
“Including Lieutenant Seeger’s.”
“She recently had a physical,” Gibbs questions her.
“That’s correct.”
“Well, I’ll like to see her medical records.”
“Only her doctor is privy to those.”
“NCIS has access to all military records.”
“His wife isn’t military. She’s a dependent.”
“Doesn’t matter.”
“I’ll have to check on that. Might take a while.”
“Where were between two and three p.m. Tuesday,” I ask her.
“At a medical conference.”
“Where?” Gibbs inquires of her.
“D.C.”
“We have two great suspects,” Tony complains while we all sit around in the squid room.
“Commander Green because of the complaint filed against her which would threaten her pension and
her future with the navy,” Kate continues to explain the first of our great suspects.
“Laura Seeger who’d get diddly if her divorce went through.”
“Green had access to her DNA, she could easily have done it,” Tony explains while Kate’s phone
starts to ring. “I’d put my money on her. The whole sexual harassment thing… that’s just wrong.”
“That was Arlene in records. I think I just got the answer to the mystery,” Kate say when she hangs
up her phone.
“The holy grail of dating,” Tony says the next day after Gibbs, Tony, Kate and sheriff Dupray
arrested the murders last night but Gibbs wouldn’t let me come along to help again.
“Where do you come up with this stuff?” Kate questions Tony while I move to hand Gibbs his copy of the report.

“Although, twins that kill… not good.”

“I just can’t imagine killing someone for your sister. I would never kill for my sister.”

“I wouldn’t kill for you. Hell I wouldn’t even get you a cup of coffee,” I say while sitting down on Gibbs desk edge.

“Yeah, you barely return her calls,” Tony say to Kate while everyone but Kate smiles at what I said.

“Identical twins, identical DNA, identical murders. One for the books,” Gibbs cuts into the conversation while signing the end of his report.

“I’ll bet Laura was splitting Swiss Army Knife money with Linda, that’s why Linda killed her sister’s husband.”

“..Sheriff Dupray’s statement,” A report says on the TV behind Tony.

“There’s Charlie,” Kate says in realization.

“Thank you all for coming. Before I take your questions, there is a group of people that I want to thank,” Sheriff Dupray say through the TV.

“Oh, we’re finally going to get some credit,” Tony say with a happily smile.

“They’re sort of the unsung heroes in all of this.”

“Not when you start singing,” Kate says.

“I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the citizens of Grayson Country, for putting their faith in me. I couldn’t have solved this triple murder without your support. Now I’ll take your questions,” Sheriff Dupray said before the reporter starts asking questions and the sheriff answers them.

“It’s an election year,” Gibbs answers Kate and Tony’s unasked question.

“Now that’s over. I have to ask, why do you need an emergency contact?” I ask Kate.
“This is my favourite part of the day. “Oh Debbie, and Lisa, Lisa, Lisa,” Tony say while looking through his mail.

“Since when did you start giving women your work address?” Kate questions him.

“Oh, since I broke up with Michelle.”

“The social worker?”

“Yeah, we had a little misunderstanding.”

“Like what?”

“Well, she was under the impression that we were in an exclusive relationship.”

“Imagine that! So what happened?”

“She broke into my apartment and filled my closet with dog crap.”

“Really? I knew there was a reason I liked her,” Kate says with a laugh at the very thought.

“I still have her number. Maybe you two could get together and boil rabbits or something.”

“Not my style, Tony. I would just shoot you.”

“But when Gibbs offered for you to shoot Tony you turned him down,” I remind her making Tony give me a confused look.

“And that would be the reason for rule number twelve,” Gibbs informs Kate while walking over to his desk where I am sitting.

“Rule twelve?” Kate ask Gibbs.

“Never date a co-worker. Come on. The director wants to see us. Now?” Gibbs orders while leading us to MTAC.

“Three weeks ago a marine officer transporting two million dollars of Saddam Hussein’s cash was ambushed in Iraq. His driver was found dead on the scene. The officer and the cash was MIA. The officer was Colonel Lou Ryan, Agent Gibbs,” Morrow, the director of NCIS, informs Gibbs.

“What?” Gibbs ask in surprise without sounding over surprised.

“The FBI sent this footage of the main terminal at Washington Dulles Airport. Two days ago he was spotted re-entering the country under an assumed name. The question is why.”

“Some kind of classified op, sir?” Kate question the director.

“Well, if it is, no one at the Pentagon knows anything about it, Agent Todd. The FBI believes he may have staged the ambush and taken the money himself.”

“That’s not possible, sir. If he’s back in the states, I guarantee he’s got a damn good reason,” Gibbs advises the director.

“If so, it’s what I’m looking forward to hearing. You need to find him and bring him in. if he’s turned on us, it could compromise half our operations in Iraq.”

“The Colonel would rather die than betray our country, sir.”

“Oh let’s hope it doesn’t come to that. As of today, he just made the FBI’s most wanted list.”

“What’s SERE school?” Kate questions Tony after pulling up the Colonel’s jacket.

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“Ryan served as an instructor there for three years. His O.Q.R reads like something out of Soldier of Fortune,” Kate informs Tony while he walks up to Gibbs desk and picks up the parcel that is sitting on it.

“What do you think is in here?” Tony question Kate while shaking the box next to his ear.

“Probably some part for his boat.”

“No, I don’t think so. The postage is from overseas,” Tony says while shaking it some more.

“Tony.”

“He’s standing right behind me, isn’t he?” Tony asks before addressing Gibbs, “Do you want me to open this for you, boss?”

“No,” Gibbs answers while snatching the box off of Tony.
“Ah, the Colonel’s personal effects are en route from Iraq. They’ll be here in forty-eight hours.”

“Anything interesting in his jacket, Kate?”

“Iraq hasn’t caught up with his records yet, but judging by his background, he won’t be easy to find,” Kate notifies Gibbs.

“Unless you happen to know the man. I have a pretty good idea where to look.”

“How?”

“Check the sedan out of the motor pool. I’ll tell you on the way,” Gibbs orders making Tony and Kate go and do just that but I don’t move.

“Do you want me to wait here or can I come along?” I ask Gibbs while he picks up the box.

“You can come.”

“Do you want a moment with your box?”

“You don’t what to know what it is?”

“Are you going to tell me?”

“You can stay,” Gibbs informs me while using his knife to open the box. He puts on gloves and removes a flask out of the box with a bullet hole in it and a note that reads, ‘MILLIONS BEING SMUGGLED OUT OF IRAQ. USED TO FUND COVERT OPERATIONS OUTSIDE MILITARY AND GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT. I’LL CONTACT WHEN I KNOW MORE.’

On the flask with an inscription that reads, ‘TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL W.D. RYAN. “SEMOER FI” GUNNERY SERGEANT L.J. GIBBS 1991.’

“Anytime the Colonel took leave, he’d come here,” Gibbs explains while bringing the car to a stop and getting out.

“Not exactly my idea of a vacation,” Kate says while looking at a rundown cabin.

“I think it looks great,” I say while staring out the old cabin.

“You should see it in the summertime,” Gibbs says to Kate while walking past a boat in the making.

“How can you tell?” Kate questions Gibbs.

“Somebody stormed this place. He wouldn’t shoot the lock off his own door.”

“Any idea who, boss?” Tony questions Gibbs next.

“Not yet,” Gibbs informs Tony while walking away.

“Do you think he knows more than he’s telling us?” Kate asks Tony.

“Come on, Kate, this is Gibbs we’re talking about. Of course he does,” Tony answers her.

“No, that’s right. We need the MTAC vehicle and the M.E. Oh, yeah, and I’m also going to need a dog. Well then find me one. Right. We’ll be here,” Gibbs says into his phone when I walk into the main room. “DiNozzo! What do you make of this?” Gibbs calls out.

“Ooh. So you think it’s Ryan that’s wounded? That makes sense if he was in the bedroom when his company arrived. They blast the lock. Ryan pops out of the bedroom. He starts to run, takes a hit, and keeps on going out the back door,” Tony says while looking at a blood trail.

“That still doesn’t explain our body in there. Either he was already here or your shooter stopped to tie him in the chair,” Kate says to us.

“Do you hear that?” Gibbs asks over Kate.

“Hear what?”
“Sounds like a… like a beeper.”
“It’s probably the guy’s watch,” Tony says without a care in the world.
“I checked his wrists, Tony. He wasn’t wearing one,” Kate informs Tony making us all stop and exchange looks. Gibbs looks under the bed and sees a bomb making all of us run out of the house and jump over the car to hide behind it.
“Are you sure it was a bomb, Gibbs?” Tony asks Gibbs while we hide.
“Yes, DiNozzo! For the last time yes, I’m sure it was a bomb,” Gibbs answers him while pulling me against his chest between his legs.
“If you say so. D.O.D is sure taking their sweet time getting here,” Tony says while a van come to a stop in front of us.
“Sorry we’re late. Gerald got us lost several times,” Ducky informs us while getting out of the truck.
“Me?! You had the map,” Gerald cries out to Ducky.
“We have our own problems here, Ducky,” Gibbs informs him from our spot on the ground.
“Yeah, I can see that. The FBI take over our crime scene again?” Ducky asks us.
“Gibbs thought he saw a bomb,” Kate says.
“What do you mean thought?” Gibbs demands.
“Do I really have to say it?”
“Say what?”
“Yes, Kate. Say what?” Ducky says to Kate.
“You need glasses, Gibbs. Are you happy?” Kate says and just after she finished talking the cabin explodes.
“I’m sorry. I didn’t quite catch that last bit,” Gibbs says while debris falls around us.
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“Yes, DiNozzo! For the last time yes, I’m sure it was a bomb,” Gibbs answers him while pulling me against his chest between his legs.
“If you say so. D.O.D is sure taking their sweet time getting here,” Tony says while a van come to a stop in front of us.
“Sorry we’re late. Gerald got us lost several times,” Ducky informs us while getting out of the truck.
“Me?! You had the map,” Gerald cries out to Ducky.
“We have our own problems here, Ducky,” Gibbs informs him from our spot on the ground.
“Yeah, I can see that. The FBI take over our crime scene again?” Ducky asks us.
“Gibbs thought he saw a bomb,” Kate says.
“What do you mean thought?” Gibbs demands.
“Do I really have to say it?”
“Say what?”
“Yes, Kate. Say what?” Ducky says to Kate.
“You need glasses, Gibbs. Are you happy?” Kate says and just after she finished talking the cabin explodes.

“Sounds like a… like a beeper.”
“It’s probably the guy’s watch,” Tony says without a care in the world.
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“You need glasses, Gibbs. Are you happy?” Kate says and just after she finished talking the cabin explodes.
“What’s up Gibbs?” I ask Gibbs when we get into the elevator.
“Can you get me a coffee?”
“Sure. Why didn’t you ask me to draw the victim?”
“Because Kate was looking at the body longer then you.”
“Okay, that makes sense.”

Do you think Colonel Ryan’s innocent?” Kate questions Tony the following day after finding out the Colonel has been in the states for a week and a half just the night before.
“Gibbs seems to think so,” Tony answers without answering.
“The man disappears from a war zone with two millions dollars. Ends up in the states under an assumed name. What’s that tell you?”
“He leads an interesting life?” I answer her from my spot behind Gibbs computer.
“What about the dead body we found in his cabin?”
“Like I said, Gibbs thinks um,” Tony states but Kate cuts him off.
“You don’t always have to follow his lead, you know.”
“I don’t always follow his lead.”
“Like when?”
“Like… remember that girl Michelle I told you about?”
“The one with the dog?”
“Yeah. Gibbs met her once, told me to run while I still had the chance.”
“Agent DiNozzo. Agent Todd. Alice” Fornell say while walking over to us.
“Agent Fornell. Why am I not surprised to see you?” Kate asks while looking at Fornell.
“Fornell, it is always a pleasure to see you. When are you leaving?” I request of Fornell.
“For the heck of it, I thought you might enjoy some coffee,” Fornell says while handing everyone a cup of coffee.
“What did you do to it? Di you spit in it? Or something like that? I really don’t what to catch your STD.”
“Is this the FBI’s idea of an apology?”
“Think of it more as a peace offering,” Fornell corrects Kate while giving me another look.
“It’s going to take more than your house special blend after the stunt you pulled,” Tony informs Fornell.
“I thought as much. Croissant?” Fornell offers.
“When are you leaving? Really?” I ask Fornell again.
“It’s a start,” Tony ask at the same time as me while taking a croissant.
“Where’s Gibbs? We have a lot to talk about,” Fornell questions us while giving me a look.
“You’ve got that right, Fornell,” Tony say while walking into the bullpen.
“When is Fornell leaving?” I ask for the third time.
“Do you mind telling me what you were doing in Georgetown last night?” Fornell inquires of Gibbs while ignoring me again.
“Why didn’t you ask your men?” Gibbs ask Fornell in fake confusion.
“The colonel’s in a lot of trouble, Gibbs. Level with me and I might be able to help.”
“I have a better idea. You level with me and I’ll decide if I need your help.”
“No, it’s not going to work that way.”
“Tony, Kate, entertain our guests. Agent Fornell and I are going to have a little chat in private.”
“I feel sorry for your boss,” the agent, that carried the coffee for Fornell, informs us when Fornell and Gibbs gets into the elevator.
“And why is that?” Kate question him.
“You obviously don’t know Fornell very well.”
“We’ve worked with him before.”
“We just don’t particularly like him,” Tony finishes for her.
“So you do know him,” The agent says in surprise.
“When are you leaving?” I ask the agent since Gibbs and Fornell ignored me.
“He was getting married next month,” Abby informs us when we arrive in the lab after Gibbs and Fornell finish talking over being lied to.

“We don’t know it’s Agent Carlson yet,” Fornell reminds us.

“I’m sorry but I’m afraid it is. The dental records are conclusive. Our John Doe is your missing agent,” Ducky notifies Fornell of the bad news.

“Now your Colonel is a murderer.”

“Colonel Ryan didn’t do this,” Gibbs informs him.

“And how could you possible know that?”

“There was evidence of a break in and a gun battle at his cabin,” Kate explains to Fornell.

“We need to see it,” The agent orders of us.

“So do we. Unfortunately it was incinerated in the explosion,” Tony enlightens him.

“That’s pretty convenient.”

“Hey, all this started because you people lied to us.”

“Agent Todd, if Ryan’s innocent, how did my men end up handcuffed to this cabinet in the first place?” Fornell questions us.

“I’ll get you your evidence,” Gibbs inform them.

“How?”

“Any way I can,” Gibbs answers while walking.

“Are they leaving now?” I ask Gibbs while following Gibbs.

“You really what them gone?”

“You don’t?”

“I don’t like them.”

Abby?” Gibbs ask Abby in surprise when he sees her in the warehouse at night after the FBI left for the day.

“Hey Gibbs,” Abby answers Gibbs.

“What did you want to see me about?”

“I’m retesting Colonel Ryan’s vehicle to make sure, but I don’t think this damage came from an Iraqi weapon system.”

“What then?”

“Well, the chemical signatures are matched to an American AT-Four. It’s a light anti-tank weapon. It looks like friendly fire.”

“I don’t know if friendly anything to do with it. Thanks, Abs.”

“Uh… Gibbs?”

“Hmmm?”

“Actually, we asked you to come down here for another reason.”

“We?”

“She means us,” Kate informs Gibbs while stepping out of the shadows with Tony and me following her.

“We need to talk to you, boss,” Tony adds.

“About what?” Gibbs ask us in suspicion.

“About what you’re not telling us,” Kate informs him.

“We know you made contact with Colonel Ryan,” Tony adds onto the end of what Kate said.

“Tony lifted your cell phone while you were charging it today. You received a phone call last night around nineteen hundred from a bar payphone in Georgetown, McPhinley’s Pub.”

“You lifted my cell phone?” Gibbs ask him, half out of surprise and half out of anger at the same time.

“Borrowed. But uh… we showed your photo and Ryan’s to the bartender this afternoon,” Tony explains to Gibbs before he can react too badly about his phone being touched.

“He remembered seeing the both of you between twenty one hundred and twenty one thirty,” Kate cuts Tony.
“Which explains why you knew Ryan had been in the country more than two days,” Abby realises.
“You borrowed my cell phone?” Gibbs asks again.
“Yes, Gibbs they did. Now can we go home?” I ask everyone.
“Look, we understand the situation and we just want to help,” Kate informs Gibbs while giving me a look for wanting to go home without talking to Gibbs about lying and caring the problem on his own.
“We can’t back your play if we don’t know what it is,” Tony finishes for her.
“And Kate won’t take me home until you tell them. So please hurry up, I want to have a long bath and go to sleep,” I tell Gibbs while looking at Gibbs in the hope that he will give then enough.
“Let me get this straight. What you’re saying is you stole my cell phone,” Gibbs says again.
“Are you still stuck on that? They are stupid but can we move on now?”
“I think next time we can skip the cell phone part, Kate,” Tony says to Kate.
“What? There’s going to be a next time? Hell no, I’m calling Ducky to come and get me,” I say while pulling my phone out but Kate takes it off me before I can.
“This tape could prove that Colonel Ryan did not kill Fornell’s agent. Do you think you can find out what’s on that for me?” Gibbs asks Abby while handing the tape to her.
“All you had to do was ask, Gibbs,” Abby answers while taking the tape off Gibbs.
“Okay. Okay, I will try to remember that for next time,” Gibbs tells her while Abby leaves. “Tony, touch my cell phone again, I’ll break your fingers.”
“That went well. Can we go home know? I need my beauty sleep,” I inform them while Kate says something too Tony but I don’t hear or care what.

“So, you’re asking the questions! What is the money being used for?! Who is running your unit?” Ryan asks on the tape Abby has recovered.
“The end of the tape received the most damage. I haven’t been able to pull much info from it. The video processing lab would probably have better luck,” Abby informs us.
“I’d like to keep this in-house. See what you can do,” Gibbs orders her nicely.
“Anyone catch a glimpse of the person he was talking to off camera?” Tony adds.
“No, but he called him Lieutenant Cameron. Did you ever hear of him, Gibbs?” Kate questions Gibbs.
“The Colonel and I used to work with a Lieutenant Cameron,” Gibbs states.
“Do you think it’s him?” Tony asks her next.
“Nope.”
“Why not?” I ask Gibbs softly.
“Because he died fourteen years ago.”
“Was there anyone in the bar with him last night?” Tony asks Gibbs next.
“Not that I could tell. Kate, run down every Cameron you can find in the Pentagon database.”
“You got it.” Kate says to him.
“Abby, you and Tony transfer out the tape. I had a tough time following his line of questioning.”
“Where are you going?” Tony questions Gibbs.
“What do you want me to do?” I ask Gibbs at the same time.
“Home. To think,” Gibbs answers Tony while placing a hand on my back and leads me to the elevator.

“There’s no need for that, Gunny,” Ryan says while walking down the stairs to Gibbs basement that night, where Gibbs is pointing his gun at him.
“You’re not looking too good, sir,” Gibbs says while looking at his old commander.
“Looks can be deceiving,” Ryan informs Gibbs while looking over at my sleeping place under the boat.
“I watched the tape. The man following you is FBI.”
“Now you know what I’m up against. I told you, they’re everywhere.”
“Who are you talking to off camera?”
“You didn’t recognize his voice?”
“Whose voice?”
“Your company X.O.”
“You’re working with Lieutenant Cameron?”
“Just like old times, Gunny.”
“Sir, Lieutenant Cameron is dead.”
“Yeah. Yeah, I thought so too. This group has been active since Desert Storm. They tried to recruit him but he fooled them.”
“He died in my arms, sir. You were standing right there.”
“You saw what they wanted to see. When are you going to get it?”
“I get it. You need help. I’m taking you in, sir.”
“Put the gun down.”
“No. no, I can’t do that!”
“It was the second place I looked. I know it’s a shock, Jethro, but maybe you’ll believe your own eyes. Lieutenant?”
“He doesn’t look happy to see me, Colonel,” Cameron says.
“This proof has been influencing national policy for years, Gunny, the bad intel we were fed on Iraq, the breakdown on the info prior to Nine Eleven,” Ryan says to Gibbs the next morning while standing around in Gibbs basement.
“Lieutenant Cameron was working with them?” Gibbs answer in surprise.
“More like infiltrating,” Cameron corrects him.
“It’s part of a small cell. We’ve been trying to trace the organization and find out who’s at the top,” Ryan continues.
“Well, then we need help. We should go to my office,” Gibbs tries again.
“Negative!” Cameron answers without a thought.
“They’d kill us before we even got close to the building,” Ryan explains.
“The way I see it, Colonel, we’re a little outgunned here.”
“Well, we’ve made some preparations.”
“What kind?” Gibbs answer him.
“Oh, you’d be amazed at what you can get your hands on these days.”
“Is that why you needed the two million you took from Iraq?”
“What makes you think we have it?”
“They tore your cabin apart looking for something.”
“Then they must have been pretty upset when they didn’t find it.”
“Well, yeah. Yeah, they were. They blew it up. Where’s the money?”
“Some place safe.”
“We need to tell him.”
“I don’t know, sir. What if he doesn’t believe us?” Cameron answers the colonel.
“Colonel, look, you contacted me. You want my help, you have to level with me,” Gibbs says to him.
“No, it’s not that we don’t trust you, Gunny, the question is, are you prepared to believe it?” Ryan asks Gibbs.
“The perfect base of operations. It’s in my aunt’s name. Nobody’s used it for years,” Ryan informs us when we get to a warehouse.
“Base for what?” Gibbs questions him.
“To fight a war. They’re not the only one who know how to smuggle things out of Iraq.”
“What exactly are you planning, Colonel?” I ask the colonel while moving out from behind Gibbs.
“I’m planning on exposing them… by force if necessary.”
“What about the missing money?” Gibbs asks him.
“Half of it’s here, half at another location with the Lieutenant.”
“How long have you know he was still alive?”
“I’m confused whose dead?” I ask Gibbs.
“Almost two years now,” Ryan answers Gibbs while ignoring me.
“Where is he now?” Gibbs asks while signing to me when the colonel’s not looking, ‘my old O.X.’
“He’s close,” Ryan answers while Gibbs phone beeps. “Whoa. Whoa. Whoa. Who are you calling?”
“I need to contact my team, see if they got any information out of that video tape you gave me,”
Gibbs informs Ryan, before calling Tony on the phone, “Well, that’s a god thing we’re not there then. Well, he’s smarter then he looks. See if you can get Abby to pull whatever she can off that video for me. Anything… I wasn’t planning on it. I’ll be in touch.”
“I need to know what the Lieutenant’s been telling you,” I inform Ryan while pulling out my notebook to take notes.
“Enough to convince me that they have people in every branch of our government,” Ryan answers me.
“How do you know you can believe him?” Gibbs asks him next.
“He saved my life in Iraq. He has no reason to lie.”
“Yeah,” Gibbs says into the phone, “To where? Got it,” Gibbs ask before hanging up the phone and turning and saying, “I know who’s behind your conspiracy. We I.D.ed him off the tape.”
“That his address?” Ryan ask while pointing at Gibbs notebooks.
“Yes, it is. We can pick him up for questioning.”
“No, no. you don’t cut off conspiracy by taking out foot soldiers. You strike at the head.”
“No, you’ve got to trust me on this.”
“Trust you? Trust you like the Lieutenant trusted you? Or have you forgotten about Lieutenant Cameron?”
“No, Sir! I have not forgotten him. I think about him every night! Have you forgotten him, sir?!?”
“Go, go, go!” A voice yells out while to door slides open.
“IT’s the FBI! Put your hand in the air!” Charles yells while agents rush in while shotting.
“NCIS! Cease fire,” Gibbs calls out to them while hiding from the gunfire with me and Ryan.
“You set me up!” Ryan accuses Gibbs and me.
“Yeah, totally. That’s why we are hiding her two,” I answer him while holding onto Gibbs coat.
“Then why are they shooting at me?!! Stay down and let me do the talking. Hold your fire! NCIS! Cease fire!” Gibbs overlaps me while Ryan gets up and runs out the back.
“We’ve got a runner!” a voice yells again.
“Cease fire! Cease fire! Damn it! Stop shooting! We need to talk,” Gibbs yells over the gunfire.
“You’re under arrest,” Charles informs us.
“For what?” Gibbs and I ask at the same time.
“For pissing off the FBI.”
“Well, I ask when you were leaving, but no one would answer me. So it is your fault,” I remind the FBI guy.
“Get used to it,” Gibbs says to.
“Give me one reason I don’t charge you with aiding and abetting a suspected murderer right now,” Fornell demands Gibbs and me.
“I know where Colonel Ryan is headed,” Gibbs informs him.
“What?”
“Your men are trigger-happy, Fornell. Let me bring him in.”
“You’re not exactly in a position to be making demands, Gibbs.”
Do you want him or not?”
“If you screw me on this…”
“I’ll consider it a bonus.”
“Then you leave right?” I ask Fornell making Gibbs smile.

“Though it’s rare for paranoid schizophrenia to strike a man this late in life, it’s not unheard of. I’m hoping that with the right medication he can return to a relatively normal life,” Tollin, Ryan’s doctor, explains to us. It turns out that the Lieutenant was just part of Ryan’s mind.

“Just because you’re paranoid, doesn’t mean people aren’t out to get you,” Fornell states.

“Are you leaving know?” I ask Fornell again.

“Any idea why he fixated on Lieutenant Cameron, Gibbs?” Kate ask Gibbs while shoving me because I was rude to Fornell again.

“Yeah. Some,” Gibbs answers while signing, ‘he will be gone soon.’

‘Promise?’ I sign back.

‘I promise.’
“He’s not an American Naval officer?” Ducky questions Gerald while him and I walk into the autopsy at night.

“They said he was a Royal Navy Commander,” Gerald informs him.

“Well, which Navy, Gerald? There are several of them.”

“I assume British, Doc.”

“The Swedes, the Norwegians, Aussies, Kiwis, Saudis,” I say with thinking them up on the spot before adding, “They all have Royal Navies.”

“Well, the EMT only said that the Embassy told them to bring him to NCIS for autopsy.”

“Which Embassy?” Ducky inquires of Gerald while walking over to the body bag.

“IIsraeli.”

“Israeli?” Ducky and I ask him together in confusion.

“That’s what they said.”

“Hmm. Why on earth would the Israeli Embassy send us a foreign naval officer?” Ducky asks in confusion.

“Well that’s what I ask the EMT that delivered the body, but they didn’t know either.”

“He calls me down here in the middle of the night, doesn’t know which Navy. Gerald, what does this look like?” Ducky complains while going over to his drawers and opens them.

“Uh… one of my gloves.”

“What’s it doing in my drawer?”

“I’m sorry, doc, I must have put your gloves in my drawer. I’ll get it.”

“No, I’ll do it. Ah, Gerald, unzip that body bag and find out with which Navy our guest sailed,” Ducky orders making Gerald and I walk over to the bag and unzip it but both of us freeze when we see what is in the bag. “Don’t recognize the uniform. I’m not surprised. The Royal Navies of the world wear almost identical uniforms. In fact, during World War Two, British Naval Officer whose ships went down in the channel, passed themselves off in Antwerp as German submariners who,” Ducky rambles while coming back over to us and saying, “Good god.”

“Shut off the lights,” Ari, the unknown naval officer, orders of us with a very strong Israeli accent while pointing a gun out us, “And return. Is the video camera on?”

“Sorry, doc,” Gerald whispers to Duck when Ari shoots the camera out.

“That’s all right, Gerald. I looked at it too,” Ducky whispers back to him while hiding me behind his body as much as possible.

“How do you alert visitors when conducting infectious autopsy?” Ari inquires of us while pointing the gun out us still.

“We hang a decomposing body in the corridor,” Ducky and I answer at the same time.

“A sense of humour under duress – that’s an admirable quality, Doctor, ma’am. However, when I ask a question, I want a truthful and immediate answer. So every time you lie or I suspect you lie, I will put a nine millimetre, hollow point slug into one of your assistant’s ball and socket joints. If you doubt me, I can demonstrate.”

“That won’t be necessary. May I make a request?” Ducky jumps in while stepping in front of both Gerald and myself.

“You would rather I put the slug in you?”

“Yes.”

“I can’t oblige. How do you alert people to infectious autopsies?”

“A lit red sign in the corridor.”

“Gerald, the sign, please. Just a moment. Also lock the door and bring me a set of greens and breathing gear.”

“What is it you want?” I question Ari in a brave and confident tone voice.
“In due time, Doctor…”
“Mallard,” Ducky answers Ari.
“Like the famous English a-Four steam, locomotive.”
“Most people think of waterfowl.”
“Ah, the Mallard ran from London to Edinburgh for decades. In nineteen thirty eight it attained a speed of over two hundred kilometres an hour.”
“Two hundred and two.”
“A world record. Although the Germans claimed it was set on a slight down grade. Typical. And Miss…?”
“My friends and family call me Alice. But you can’t my friend or family, so you can stick with ma’am,” I state to Ari making him chuckle at me for a moment.
“Right ventricle, left atria. You haven’t done the autopsy,” Ari says while looking at another dead body that is in one of the draws, we have already been hold hostage by him all night.
“It was late. I was due to autopsy today,” Ducky explains to him.
“Then you best place him on the table. Did you draw blood last night?”
“Yes.”
“Is it refrigerated here?”
“No.”
“You sent it with his clothing to forensics?”
“Yes. Are you a pathologist?”
“Where is the lab?”
“One floor up. Directly above us,” Gerald informs him.
“There’s a stairwell outside to the left you can use,” I inform him.
“Not the elevator?” Ari ask me.
“I assumed you’d think that too risky.”
“Is it an emergency stairwell?”
“No. Emergency stairwells has alarm that would go off the moment you open the door.”
“Surveillance camera?”
“I don’t know. I’ve never looked, but then I have never taken autopsy hostage.”
“Yes,” Ducky informs him making Ari place the gun to Gerald’s shoulder, “I answered promptly and I haven’t lied.”
“Leave him alone,” I yells while moving Gerald behind me.
“You tried to trick me, Alice, Doctor Mallard,” Ari accuses us.
“No, I answered your questions. I didn’t know there was cameras in the stairs.”
“That wasn’t a condition,” Ducky exclaims at the same time.
“It is now,” Ari say while moving the gun away from Gerald.
“Ducky, you’re in early,” Abby says when she answers her phone.
“Abby, turn down the babble,” Ducky orders her when we can’t hear her over the music she is always playing.
“Babble? You love Android Lust!”
“Not distorted by a speaker phone!”
“Ducky, you’re suck a purist! What’s up?”
“I need the evidence Gerald delivered last night.”
Oh, good luck. I haven’t even has my morning sprinkles yet.”
“I didn’t ask for the results. I need it all back, including the blood.”
“What are you going to do with the blood?”
“Abby, just get it down here!”
“Wow. Did you get up on the wrong side of the autopsy table?”
“Sorry. I have a theory to test.”
“Want to share?”
“Not quite yet.”
“Okay. Send Gerald up.”
“He’s busy. You’ll have to bring it down here.”
“Ducky, you know I can’t do that.”
“Abby, I don’t have time to deal with your necrophobia.”
“I am not necrophobic. Dead bodies don’t freak me out. Autopsy does. Ducky, please don’t ask me
to do this.”
“You won’t have to enter autopsy. In fact, you can’t. We’ve opened an infectious body. Leave it at
the door.”
“I can’t even press the down button on the elevator anymore!”
“Get Gibbs to do it. STAT,” Ducky orders before hanging up the phone.
“Ame I to believe that?” Ari asks us.
“Well Abby, who is unfazed by the most gruesome of forensics, recently started having nightmares,”
I explain to him while moving over to a chair and sitting down on the autopsy bed.
“Since then, she has not set foot in autopsy,” Ducky finishes for me.
“Gerald, is that true?” Ari questions Gerald.
“She hasn’t been down for quite a while,” Gerald answers him.
“A code word could have triggered that absurd conversation.”
“Abby and I are not special agents. We’re forensic scientists. We do not use code words. Surely you
understand the power of phobias?” Ducky exclaims to Ari in anger.
“‘Butterflies.’”
“Sorry.”
“I fear Butterflies.”
“What the hell can a butterfly do to you?” I question Ari in confusion.
“Good. Well, not good that you have a phobia, but good that you understand that not a word said
coded to alert Abby,” Ducky exclaims before Ari can react to what I said.
“Who is Gibbs?” Ari asks making me laugh at him.
“Gibbs is the only other person Abby has told of her phobia. He’s also the one person she’d turn to
for help.”
“Is he a special agent?”
“Yes, but does that matter? Look, all I’m trying to do is to give you the evidence so you can do what
you came here to do and leave.”
“Have you worked with Doctor Mallard long, Gerald?” Ari questions Gerald when we stop talking
to her.
“A bit over two years,” Gerald answers him.
“Quick on his feet?”
“He was a miler at Eton. Still recalls all of his races in great detail.”
“Your sense of humour seems to be contagious, Doctor Mallard.”
“No, I’m afraid Gerald took you literally. I have a way of going on about my salad days. He
associates ‘quick on my feet’ with my stories of the playing fields of Eton,” Ducky explains to Ari.
“Do you believe Wellington actually said that?”
“Probably not. But most Etonians love to think he did.”
“Are you lost, Gerald, Alice?”
“‘The battle of Waterloo was won on the playing field of Eton,‘” Gerald explains to Ari what he
knows.
“Very good.”
“Stick around the doc long enough and you pick up a lot of trivia knowledge,” I explain to Ari while
watching him closely.
“Trivia?” Ducky questions me.
“Much as I’d enjoy that, I have to decline. So you believe this,” Ari says while looking for the name
in his ugly head before he says, “Abby was it?”
“Abby Sciuto,” Gerald informs him making me hiss his name in warning.
“Abby Sciuto has really developed an autopsy phobia?”
“Truthfully…”
“I think your shoulder would prefer that.”
“I never figured anyone who slept in a coffin could have a phobia, but it’s the kind of kinky thing Abby would get.”
“She slept in a coffin?”
“She’s a goth,” Duck and I state.
“Autopsy,” Ducky answers the phone without putting it on speaker. “Yeah, I knew you could do it. See you in ten minutes, Abby,” Ducky says before hanging up the phone.
“Why didn’t you use the speaker phone?” Ari demands of Ducky.
“Oh, sorry! I didn’t think. I always pick up my phone.”
“You can leave it there,” Ducky orders when Kate knocks on the door.
“You have to sign,” Kate tells him.
“Well, I can’t open the door with you there.”
“What’s the infection?”
“Don’t know yet. He’s got a pustule on his thigh. It may be nothing. Yeah, I’ll sign. Cross my heart.”
“I beat my phobia!”
“Yes, so I see, Abby. Well down,” Ducky calls out while Kate puts the box down.
“When did lab rats start carrying Sig Sauer’s?” Ari demands of us.
“No throw away? Special Agent Caitlin Todd. Are you any good with this gun, Caitlin?” Ari questions Kate once he pulls her into autopsy and gets her id, after making her lay on the autopsy table.
“Give it back and I’ll demonstrate,” Kate says to him.
“Mmm, ever fire it in anger?”
“I would love to right now.”
“Did you shoot Qassam? Did you put that double tap in his heart?”
“She didn’t shoot him,” Ducky and I exclaim.
“Who did?”
“Special Agent Gibbs,” I inform him.
“Alice,” Kate exclaims.
“I have been down here all night with this SOB. So don’t Alice me, I don’t what to get dead because of your tip lips,” I exclaim to Kate making her freeze.
“That name rings a bell, Doctor Mallard,” Ari questions Ducky.
“Don’t answer this bastard,” Kate orders him.
“You mustn’t chastise the good doctor, Caitlin, at least not until you know my rules.”
“I don’t play by terrorist rules.”
“Who says I’m a terrorist? Doctor, is this all the evidence?”
“From what I can see from here. Gerald?” Ducky answers to the best of his ability.
“It looks like all of it,” Gerald answers it as well.
“Caitlin, you may roll over now if you keep your hands where they are. Did Special Agent search Qassam’s room? Where is the evidence that was bagged and tagged? Doctor, please explain the rules to stubborn little Caitlin,” Ari orders.
“If we lie, or he thinks we’re lying, he’ll put a bullet in one of Gerald’s joints,” Ducky explains to Kate.
“Be specific. Ball and socket joints. And you omitted one condition.”
“I did?”
“Yes, you did.”
“Oh, yes. We mustn’t try to trick him.”
“Which you tried to do, Caitlin, by saying you beat your phobia.”
“But she doesn’t know anything about the rules,” I exclaim to Ari.
“But you did, Doctor Mallard. And you joined the ruse by calling her Abby,” Ari explains while raising the gun and pointing it out Gerald but right as he pulls the trigger, I attempted to pull Gerald out of the way. The bullet goes through my shoulder and comes to a stop in Gerald’s bull and socket joint in his shoulder.

“Oh, god. No,” Gerald exclaims while trying to put pressure on his bullet wound.

“Son of a bitch,” I yell in pain at the same time.

“Don’t worry, son. I’ll take care of you,” Ducky says while coming over to Gerald and me.

“You bastard,” Kate exclaims him anger.

“You seemed like such a bright young woman and that’s all you can say?” Ari asks Kaye while Gerald shouts in pain while I put pressure on my own wound without making a sound.

“You bastard!”


“Alice,” Gerald mumbles out through the pain making Ducky look over at me to see I am almost snow white from the pain and my jaw is clamps shut so tight that my teeth are crunching.

“I would dislike having to put a slug through Gerald’s knee as well,” Ari says without a car in the world.

“Answer the phone, Doctor,” Ari orders while Ducky and Kate work on Gerald after getting me to put more pressure on my own wound.

“You answer it! I’m trying to stop this bleeding. Give him the morphine!” Ducky orders.

“Where?” Kate asks in confusion.

“In the thigh right through the cloth.”

“You better answer that call or you’ll be working on his knee,” Ari orders while Ducky get Kate to reload the morphine and giving me a shot out of the same needle.

“Kate, come here. Come here. Throw that away! Come here! Come. Put pressure on here. If blood seeps through your fingers, then push harder,” Ducky orders before answering the phone on speaker, “Autopsy.”

“Ducky. What’s with the infectious autopsy?” Gibbs answer him through the phone.

“Purely precautionary.”

“Is that why you took the evidence back?”

“Yeah, sorry. But I’m really busy.”

“Hey, is Kate there?”

“No. she left a few minutes ago.”

“Okay. You let me know when I can come down. You got me curious,” Gibbs says before the phone call is ended by Gibbs.

“I can’t wait to weigh your liver,” Ducky said while coming over to me and putting on a tight bandage to stop me bleeding before turning to work on Gerald again.

“How’s he doing?” Kate questions Ducky once he is finished working on Gerald and me.

“I’m fine,” Gerald answer for Ducky.

“The bleeding stopped. That’s good.”

“Yes, and no. Correct, Doctor Mallard?”

“I had to clamp his axillary artery to stop it,” Ducky explains while looking at my shoulder.

“Which means Gerald will lose his arm if the artery isn’t repaired and the blood flow restored soon.”

“Ducky, can’t you do that?” I ask Ducky from my spot on the table.

“This is an autopsy room, not an ER. No, I can’t. I’m sorry. He’s going to need a fully equipped room and staff,” Ducky explains to everyone.

“Which he will get as soon as I’m out of here. So where is the evidence collected in Qassam’s room?” Ari questions everyone again.

“The lock-up,” Kate final releases not answering in not an option.

“Which is?”
“In the garage, one floor up.”
“The same way I came in.”
“I don’t know how you came in.”
“In a body bag.”
“That same way you are getting out but this time you won’t be breathing,” I inform Ari without fear.
“Is it the same garage?” Ari questions everyone while pushing on my shoulder making me scream in pain from it.
“No. the evidence locker is in the garage next to forensics. Above us,” ducky EXPLAINS MAKING Ari move away from me.
“Doctor, Caitlin, put Qassam in the body bag,” Ari orders of them while a warning buzzer goes off in the corridor, “Now, please. Soon they’ll be calling to negotiate your release.”
“We don’t negotiate with terrorists,” Kate informs him while putting the body into the body bag.
“Caitlin, when you get to know mw better, you won’t call me that.”
“I have no intention of getting to know you better.”
“Are you sure?”
“I’ve regrettable had to demonstrate the consequence of not obeying my orders. The man I shot is in danger of losing his arm. And the girl is slipping in and out of conciseness,” Ari explains to the video conference call.
“Well then it’s important,” Arkin, the director of negotiator, tries to say to Ari.
“When all the evidence collected from Qassam’s room is in my hands you may have your wounded people,” Ari cuts him off.
“I’ll need the approval of the NCIS Director before i…”
“He's standing next to you. Nod yes to the negotiator, Director Morrow.”
“You have a deal. Now can we talk about releasing…?”
“You have ten minutes.”
“No, we need more tim,” Arkin tries to say but Ari just ends the call.
“Kate, no! He wants you to try,” Ducky whispers to Kate while closing the body bag when Kate looks at the scalpel.
“Doctor Mallard thinks you were daring me to pick up this knife,” Kate says while picking it up.
“The proper term is a dissecting tool,” Ari corrects Kate without answering her unasked question.
“You didn’t answer my question! You just wanted another excuse to shoot Gerald, didn’t you?” Kate explains while trying to hit him with the knife but Ari blocks her and then slaps her.
“I have no intention of shooting Gerald again, Caitlin. I did, however, want to see if I was right about you,” Ari informs her while laughing at her failed attempted.
“Next time I’ll be quicker.”
“Oh, don’t you wonder why you weren’t now?”
“Uh, could you give me a go?” Ducky ask.
“I think not, doctor. You would kill me without hesitation. I do, however, think you would regret it. Now, we have work to do if we’re all to survive this day.”
“I don’t know your name,” Arkin states to Ari.
“IS special Agent Gibbs there?” Arin ask into the phone without answering Arkin.
“I don’t know who that is.”
“I’m here,” Gibbs states.
“Thought you might be. You’ve seen me on video. My turn to see you,” Ari says to Gibbs like he is talking about the weather.
“Looking forward to it.”
“Come alone. Unarmed. And don’t forget Qassam’s things.”
“You’re older than I expected,” I hear Ari say but it is very muffled because of where I am hidden.
“Where are the other hostages?” I hear Gibbs question him, he is more muffled or farther away from my hiding spot.

“Box on the floor. Hands on top of your head, turn around, and walk back to the door.”

“Not without Gerald and Alice.”

“They won’t leave here at all unless you put the box on the floor, your hands on your head, turn around.”

“Turn around and walk back to the door,” Gibbs overlaps him before saying, “Older doesn’t mean deaf. You want out of here alive?”

“I’m sure Gerald and Alice does.”

“I think you do, too. That’s why very slowly now I’m going to reach into this box and take out of here with two fingers exactly what you want,” Gibbs explains to him and after a moment of silence Gibbs adds, “Ah! Surprise! You failed. Mission over. The real small pox virus is on its way to CDC. Do you want to talk about whether you live or die?”

“How far were you from Qassam when you shot him?”

“Oh, I don’t know.”

“You measured it for your incident report.

“Thirty seven feet and a few inches, give or take.”

“Oh, you’re a very good shot.”

“I would love to demonstrate.”

“Funny. Special Agent Todd said the same thing.”

“Where is she? And the doctor?”

“Would you truly like to demonstrate?”

“Would you truly like to demonstrate?”

“Yep.”

“Agent Todd’s Sig Sauer is in the box to your left. The clip is from the Sig Sauer. Untampered. All live rounds,” Ari explains, it is silent for a moment before Ari orders, “Pick it up.”

“Why?”

“Why not?” Ari asks before there is a couple of gun shots before I lose consciousness again.

“The way he escaped was always his backup plan. He just needed someone he could count on to shoot him in the chest to trigger the assault. Gibbs figures he was wearing a bullet proof vest all along,” Tony explains to Kate and I the following day.

“He was. I felt it,” Kate informs us while throwing me a concerned look because I am just staring at Gibbs computer screen that isn’t even on.

“You felt it? Well, how close did you get to feel it? Close enough to touch him. With your hands or did you touch him with…”

“Close enough to stab him with the knife in my hand.”

“And you didn’t.”

“No.”

“Stockholm Syndrome?”

“You can’t identify with your captor in an hour.”

“Oh, I don’t know. Maybe it’s like falling in love. That can happen,” Tony rambles before clicking his fingers and saying, “like that.”

“I was worried about Ducky, Gerald and Alice. They were down there with him for the whole night plus the day,” Kate explains to Tony while giving him a pointed look making him look over at me.
“Kate, I’ve been meaning to ask you something for a while,” Tony says to Kate when we get to the crime scene which happen to be in a warehouse.
“What’s that?” Kate snaps at him.
“What do you do with your leftover cereal when there’s not enough to eat but there’s too much to throw away? Because I was having Captain Crunch this morning and I was…”
“Tony no-one gives a fuck what you do with it okay?” I exclaim to Tony while cutting him off.
“Well, I was just trying to take your mind off him.”
“Who?” Kate questions Tony.
“The one that got away.”
“Tony, I’m not thinking about that damn terrorist.”
“Sorry.
“Look at Gibbs. He’s been growling like a wounded bear since that night,” Kate said making us all look over to Gibbs.
“Well, he is wounded,” I reminded her.
“And he always growls like a bear. It’s his way of never letting anyone know when he’s hurting. Yours is being moody,” Tony finishes what I was not going to say.
“I’m not moody!” Kate exclaims.
“You’re always moody,” I correct her.
“Oh, what do you call it? I feel sorry for whatever his name is,” Tony continues while we walk into the warehouse.
“Sorry?” Kate asks him in confusion.
“Yeah. I wouldn’t want Gibbs on my ass.”
“He always his, so what’s it matter?” I state making Tony pull a face at me.
“We’re never going to see that guy again,” Kate informs him.
“Maybe not. Gibbs will,” Tony say right before we catch up to Gibbs at the stairwell.
“Identification?” a cop asks us.
“Gibbs. N-C-I-S.” Gibbs states while showing him, his badge.
“Right through here, sir.”
“Kate, have you ever been in a men’s room before?” Tony questions Kate when he realises I am in no mood for him.
“No. have you?” Kate asks Tony making him laugh at her.
“Where’ve you been, Jethro?” Ducky questions Gibbs when we get into the bathroom.
“Someone knew a short cut, Duck,” Gibbs explains to Ducky while looking over the poor victim.
“G.W. Parkway was like a parking lot this morning,” Tony complains.
“I came on the G.W. Parkway after stopping at the hospital to visit with Gerald,” Ducky explains to us.
“How is he?” Gibbs and I ask him.
“He’s going to be in rehab for months. I want that terrorist on my table, Jethro.”
“Kate should have stabbed him when she had the chance,” I add onto the end of what Ducky said making Kate give me a look but I don’t care.
“Kate?” Gibbs stated.”
“Photos,” Kate says and gets the taking the photos.
“Tony?”
“Laser sketch,” Tony answers him.
“Talk to me about this case, Ducky.”
“Oh, it’s an odd one. Yes, our young friend here expired at approximately one a.m.,” Ducky informs us.
“Do we have an I.D.?” I question Ducky.

“Petty Officer First Chris Gordon. He’s a S.K. stationed at Pax River.”

“All this happened from him falling out of the ceiling?” Gibbs asks Ducky.

“Hardly. He suffered multiple traumatic injuries. His fall through the ceiling only added insult to injury.”

“I’m still waiting for the odd part.”

“Someone dressed him after he was killed.”

“That’s odd,” Gibbs and I state.

“Well, I’ll know more when I get him on the table,” Ducky said while looking over the body.

“Is he definitely dead?” I ask Ducky making him and Gibbs give me a look.

“Yes, he is definitely dead,” Ducky answers me while pulling out a bit of glass.

“Where’d you find that?” Gibbs question Ducky while looking at the glass.

“Safety glass, I think,” Ducky answers Gibbs while bag and tagging it. Gibbs gently squeezed my good shoulder while looking over the body.

“Did you find his cell phone?” I ask Ducky while keeping my distance from the body.

“What makes you think he had one?”

“Scrape marks on his belt where he carried it.”

“No. no cell phone.”

“One obvious question, Duck. How did Petty Officer Gordon end up in the basement ceiling?”

Gibbs questions everyone.

“Blood,” Tony says as we walk over to where the body can be put into the ceiling.

“There’s a trail leading out to the parking lot,” Gibbs states.

“What about inside the door?”

“We’ll get there. Tony, do a hundred meter perimeter search. Kate, you keep snapping.”

“Hey boss, check this out.”

“Brake marks?” I ask Tony when we walk out of parking lot.

“That’s what I thought when I was first walking up. But if they were brake marks, they’d start out light and gradually darken.”

“Front wheel drive. He was accelerating,” Gibbs states while looking at them.

“It looks like somebody ran over Petty Officer Gordon when he came out of the club, then hid his body,” Kate theories.

“And nobody saw it?” Tony asks in confusion.

“At least one person did, whoever ran him down,” I state while looking around the parking lot for a camera but am unable to find one.

“Preserve this area for evidence. Where’s the guy who runs this nightclub?” Gibbs finishes for me.

“We took his statement, then let him go,” a cop informs us.

“Are you in the habit of letting material witnesses go before they talk to investigators?”

“He had to leave.”

“Why did he have to leave?” I question the cop.

“Darin Spotnitz?” Gibbs questions a school boy when the bell goes off.

“Maybe,” Darin states without answering.

“How about now?” Gibbs questions him while showing him his badge.

“Definitely.”

“Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. Special Agent Todd, Special Agent DiNozzo, Alice.”

“What’s NCIS?”

“Naval Criminal Investigative Service,” Tony and I answer him.

“Is this about last night?”

“It is,” Gibbs states.

“Look, I already told the police all I know.”

“Then tell us.”
“I didn’t see anything. Don’t know nothing.”
“Let me guess – honours English?” Tony asks him.
“Recognize him?” Gibbs questions him while showing him the marine.
“There were like five hundred and thirty seven people there last night,” Darin informs us.
“You didn’t answer Agent Gibbs question,” I snap at him.
“No, I don’t recognize him. I wasn’t working the door.”
“Who was?” Gibbs questions him.
“Antwane.”
“Hm. Does Antwane have a last name?” I question him.
“Mann. With two n’s.”
“How do we find Antwane Mann with two n’s?” Tony questions him.
Nice P.D.A.,” Gibbs states when Darin pulls one out.
“Go Gibbs, Tony teach you that?” I question Gibbs making him give me a look.
“Actually, it’s a Motorola A-three eighty eight. It’s a P.D.A plus cell phone and internet connection. Here’s his home number, cell number, business number, fax number and address,” Darin corrects Gibbs while pulling it up.
“Kate,” Gibbs states.
“Right,” Kate says while pulling out her P.D.A.
“You want me to beam t to you?” Darin questions Kate.
“Sure.”
“How old are you?” I ask the question we are all thinking.
“Eighteen,” Darin answers us, but after a beat he changes it too, “Seventeen… two months.”
“You run this moving nightclub by yourself?” Gibbs inquires of Darin.
“That’s right.
“Do you have any employees?” I request of him.
“Well, I hire them as subcontractors. That way they’re responsible for a hundred percent of FICA and Medicare. Not half.”
“I’m sure they appreciate that,” Gibbs states.
“Yeah, well any business school professor will tell you that the objective of any company is to motivate your employees so that they provide superior goods and services. That’s why processors rarely ever succeed in business.”
“But you do,” Kate alleged.
“Yeah. I have no fixed costs. My direct costs are controllable. My purchases are two ten net thirty. My breakeven is two hundred and twelve people. My shot are dispensed by a machine to prevent any free drinks and I have internal controls to insure that all cash is accounted for.”
“What’s the deal with your heir?” Tony asks him.
“How do you think a guy from Lexington Park ends up an hour away at a party in Alexandria?” I inquire of him.
“It’s easy. It’s a Darin Spotnitz party. I put a name brand on it, you know. It’s a name brand. No one ever thought to put a brand name on a party until I did it,” Darin said before his phone starts to ring so he says, “Oh, sorry. I should take this.”
“I wouldn’t,” Gibbs states.
“Or they could just leave a message.”
“So what exactly does a Darin Spotnitz party mean?” Kate asks in confusion.
“Killer, music, great drinks, and hottie factor off the charts.”
“How do we get in touch with you?” Gibbs questions him.
“Are you going to tell my parents about this?” Darin asks us after a beat of silence.
“They don’t know?” Kate asks him.
“Well, it’s kind of illegal for me to be in a nightclub,” Darin explains before we all walkway after he beams his number to Kate’s P.D.A.
“So, if his breakeven is two hundred and twelve people and he had five hundred and thirty seven,” Kate says.
“Twenty five dollars a head,” Tony cuts her off.
“That means he cleared eight thousand, one hundred and twenty five dollars in one night. Huh!”
Kate cuts him off.
“I should have majored in business,” Tony says sadly before turning to me when we get into the car.
Tony turns to me and asks, “Why aren’t you at school Alice?”
“I talked to my principle, i do school from by home at night know,” I inform him making Tony give me a confused look from his spot in the front seat.
“Alice kept pissing her teachers off, so the principle allowed her to do school as long as she keeps up with her class,” Kate explains the reason behind it.
“They’re idiots. That’s not my fault,” I defend myself.
“You didn’t have to make them cry every day.”
“It was too easy. If they didn’t what me to make them cry, they should have had a better back bone.”
“Children, enough,” Gibbs snaps making us shut up.
Petty Officer Gordon’s quarters are around the corner, second on the right,” someone at the enlisted quarters informs us when we question him.
“Someone tossed this place,” Gibbs states when we get into Gordon’s quarters that is spotless.
“How can you tell?” Tony inquires of Gibbs.
“The furniture indentations on the carpet. No fingerprints or smudges on the ice box or the microwave.”
“No sign of forced entry. Who would have access to his room?” Kate questions everyone.
“The guy he shares a head with.”
“Or his C.O.,” Gibbs and I add together.
“How do you know he shares a bathroom?” Kate questions Tony.
“E-five and below you have up to four roommates – you share a head. E-six, you get your own space but you share a head. E-seven own room, own head,” Tony explains to her.
“Like a sorority.”
“Yeah. I wonder what they were looking for?”
“I wonder if they found it?”
“I wonder when you two guy are going to stop yakking and get to work,” Gibbs cuts in. after Gibbs speaks all of us get to work looking through the room.
“Looks like this guy was burning DVDs. That reminds me I’ve got to return Grease. It’s a week overdue,” Tony states.
“Apparently he was immune to germs,” Kate yells out from the bathroom.
“Ahh, this guy was way into reality shows. Real world, simple life, Punk’d…”
“Punk’d?” Gibbs and I ask together.
“Geez, Gibbs and Alice. Even I know what Punk’s is,” Kate exclaims.
“Punk’d is an MTV show where they play tricks on celebrities while secretly filming it,” Tony explains to us.
“Like Candid Camera,” Gibbs states.
“What’s Candid Camera?”
“What is it, Gibbs?” I asks when I notice that he is staring at the speakers.
“The funny thing about stereos, you can’t hear the music unless the speakers are connected,” Gibbs answers me before ripping open the speaker and pulling at a handful of money.
“Forty thousand dollars. All hundreds. Non-sequential,” Kate states after counting it.
“Now we know what they were looking for,” Tony says.
“And didn’t find.”
“Forty grand seems like a pretty good motive for murder,” Gibbs says.
“How does an E-six Petty officer making two thousand three hundred and ten dollars a month manage to squirrel away forty grand in cash?” Tony inquires.
“Good question. Did they swipe your brain with a monkey like you wanted too?” I ask Tony making him fake laugh at me.
“I’m guessing it’s not because he’s frugal,” Kate states.

“Can I help you?” Natter answers us when we get to the supply warehouse.

“Master Chief, NCIS. Do you got a minute?” Gibbs asks.

“Is this about Petty Officer Gordon?”

“It is,” I inform him.

“Keep your eyes open. These guys drive like they’re at Indianapolis.”

“You were Petty Officer Gordon’s section chief,” Gibbs states.

“Yes, sir.”

“Good worker?” I ask him.

“He was one of the best. He was a bit of a practical joker. I occasionally had to remind him of the time and the place.”

“Did he get along well with his mates?” Tony asks.

“Oh, yeah. There were four guys in particular he was in tight with. I called them the five musketeers.”

“Are they here?”

“No, they work the sixteen shift.”

“We looked over Gordon’s quarters. We found forty thousand dollars in cash. Any idea where he could have got that kind of money?” Gibbs questions the master chief.

“No, sir.”

“Master Chief, according to your record, you’ve been here ten years. I’m sure you know what goes on at this base more than most,” I state.

“That’s correct, ma’am.”

“If you had to come up with a way that an E-six could accumulate that kind of money,” Gibbs asks him but trailed off.

“Drugs, maybe. Although I’d bet my last dollar that Chris wasn’t involved with drugs. I don’t suspect gambling neither.”

“You don’t think sailor gamble?” Kate asks in surprise.

“I’m sure they gamble, but it’s dollar ante. If there was a regular big game, I’d know about it, Ma’am.”

“Gordon was in supply. Any chance he was getting kickbacks?” I ask the master chief.

“No chance at all. He wasn’t high enough up the food chain to influence who got contracts or what was purchased.”

“Oh, he’d have to be at what, you level?” Gibbs asks him.

“Yes, sir.”

“Alice wasn’t real subtle with that kickback comment,” Kate comments when we walk away from the master chief.

“I wasn’t trying to be,” I inform her.

“Ducky, you got some good news for me?” Gibbs questions Ducky as we walk into autopsy making me tense up from just being there.

“Well, it depends on your definition of good news,” Ducky said while Gibbs place an arm around my shoulder.

“Not the answer I was looking for.”

“It seems the more I delve into our young friend here, the more bewildered I become.”

“It’s usually the other way around.”

“Yeah, petty officer Gordon had multiple lower leg fractures; tibia, fibia. Massive abdominal bruising and ecchymosis and subdural hematoma from a skull fracture.”

“Consistent with being hit by a car?” I ask him.

“Entirely.”

“So that’s pretty straight forward. What’s the mystery?” Gibbs asks in confusion.

“There was a white substance on his hands. I sent it up to Abby. I could venture a guess as to what it
“Sure. Venture away.”
“Baby powder.”
“Powder? Was this powder applied or from incidental contact?”
“Most definitely applied.”
“Why?” I ask Ducky in confusion.
“I haven’t the faintest idea. And that’s not all. This sliver of safety glass is one of many I extracted from his skull.”
“What’s that stuck to the tip?” Gibbs asks while looking at the glass Ducky is holding it up.
“Latex, I believe. Abby will be able to confirm. But the latex was between the glass and his skull.”
“Meaning he was wearing something rubber on his head when he was hit?”
“We know someone dressed him after he was killed, based on the condition of his clothes and the bloodstain patterns.”
“I can see why you’re confused, Duck.”

“Baby powder.”

“It’s grey latex,” Abby informs us when we get into the lab after talking to Ducky.
“Rubber?” Gibbs asks her.
“One and the same.”
“Probably couldn’t be used as a hat,” I state.
“Yeah, well, not if you grew up in Dorkville.”
“I grew up just west of there,” Gibbs states.
“What do you mean ‘grew up?’ You were hatched from an egg fully grown by NCIS,” I state making Gibbs and Abby smile.
“Latex is very popular in certain circles,” Abby said while smiling at us.
“Yes, what kind of circles?”
“Oh hey, Gibbs. I don’t know if you’re ready for this. It might upset your delicate sensibilities.”
“Oh, I’ll stop you,” Gibbs informs her.
“Okay, maybe he was wearing a latex hood. Like bondage gear, S and M fetish.”
“Mm-hmm.”
“I date this guy once who just wanted me to bounce up and down on a balloon…”
“Okay, stop!”
“Where do you find your boyfriends?” I ask Abby.
“Gibbs, Alice, that is no weirder than a three hundred and fifty pound guy with half his body painted yellow and the other half painted green wearing nothing but shorts in ten degree weather and a big plastic piece of cheese on his head saying, ‘Go Packers!’” Abby informs us.
“Ah, that’s just apples and oranges,” Gibbs states.
“There’s a fetish for that, too.”
“What do you got?”
“I matched the tire track. It turns out it’s not real popular, but not terribly unpopular,” Abby informs us while walking into her back office while saying, “Kind of like my little brother in high school. Those are the five cars that come equipped with that tire.”
“Next.”
“All the blood samples from the bathroom, the parking lot, the ceiling, the stairs, were all from the victim. No drugs. And the blood alcohol level was point one zero.”
“Legally drunk,” I state.
“In all fifty states including the district of Colombia.”
“That might explain how he ended up where he did in the parking lot,” Gibbs says to us.
“Been there, done that.”
“What about the stuff he had on his hands?” I ask Abby.
“Baby powder.”
“Any idea why?” Gibbs asks.
“I don’t know. Guys have all kinds of strange rituals before they go out. This one guy… he does a
full upper body workout just seconds before his date so he can be all pumped.”
“Does Tony know you know that?” I ask Abby.
“Does Tony know that you know?” Gibbs ask her at the same time.
“Does tony know that you both know? You know, maybe it came from the car,” Abby suddenly changes the topic.
“The baby powder?”
“No, the latex. Latex has a lot of commercial applications. I’m having a computer program emailed to me that’ll recreate the accident based on the injuries. It'll give me a better idea.”
“Let me know.”
“Hey Gibbs, do you have any fetishes?” Abby calls out to Gibbs when we walk out the door making Gibbs poke his head back into the room to say.
“I have three ex-wives. I can’t afford fetishes.”

“Tony, are you a G S nine or a G S eleven?” Kate questions Tony.
“I can’t tell you.” Tony respond to Kate while I work on Gibbs computer and writing report for this case while the facile recognition runs for the terrorist in the background.

“Why not?”
“Because if I do you’ll know how much money I make.”
“So?”
“That’s personal and confidential.”
“I’m sorry, um…”
“You tell us every single detail about your dates, right down to whether they shave or not but that is too personal?” I ask Tony.
“It’s fifteen twenty,” Gibbs states while waling over to his desk.
“We’re quitting early? Tony ask but when Gibbs gives him a look Tony corrects himself too, “We’re going to PAX River.”
“To pick up Gordon’s buddies who come on at sixteen hundred,” Kate finishes for Tony.

“The four musketeers,” Gibbs states.
“We um… we drove to the club after hearing about it from a guy on the Eisenhower, Sir,” Bowman, one of the four musketeers, informs Gibbs in interrogation room.

“Hmm. How’d you get there?” Gibbs asks them.
“I drove,” Morgan, another one of the four musketeers, states.
“You only took one car?” Gibbs asks.
“Yes, sir. We got there around eleven.”
“Okay, then what?”
“We paid our twenty five bucks, went inside, did a lap around the place, had a few drinks.”
“Petty Officer Gordon was with you the whole time?”
“Until he met a babe,” Carter, yet another musketeer, states.
“Do you know her name?” Gibbs interreges the suspected.
“No, sir. Sorry.”
“She and Gordon hit it off, huh?”
“Oh, yeah.”
“What time did he leave?”
“Around midnight. With the girl. I figured he just went home with her.”
“And you were headed for PAX River.”
“Our deal was if one of us got lucky, he was on his own in terms of getting back to base,” Wong, the last musketeer, informs Gibbs.
“That happen often?” Gibbs inquires of it.
“Not really.”
“We found forty thousand dollars cash in Gordon’s room.”
“Forty thousand? You’re kidding.”
“Any idea where he got all that money?”
“No, sir.”
“What kind of car do you drive?”
“Three fifty Z,” Bowman answers.
“Escalade,” Morgan says.
“Taurus,” Wong answers.
“Taurus is one of the five cars that uses the tire,” Kate says from inside the observation room.
“…Two years,” Wong continues inside integration.
‘TAURUS IS ON THE LIST,’ appears on the P.D.A. Gibbs has on the interrogation table for moments like this.
“Is that your car on base?” Gibbs questions Wong.
“It was. I loaned it to my brother a few days ago,” Wong answers Gibbs.
“Where is he?”
“On his way to Phoenix to visit a girl he met on the Internet.”
“A bunch of guys go to a club, one of them meets a women and leaves, then turns up dead,” Kate states what we know, once we get back to the bullpen.
“Their stories are pretty consistent,” Tony agrees with her.
“A little too consistent,” Gibbs says from behind his desk.
“Do you think they’re lying?”
“They’re well-rehearsed,” I state while leaning on the bench behind Gibbs desk.
“But if that’s what really happened and they’re telling the truth, then their stories should match,” Kate states.
“They all gave a consistent description of the mystery woman. Eyewitness accounts always widely vary,” Gibbs informs her.
“These guys are in the military, Gibbs, so you’d expect more accuracy from them than you would the general public.”
“They’re storekeepers, Kate,” I state.
“They’re not SEALs. We know what happened to Gordon. What happened to the girl,” Gibbs agrees with me.
“We have no name and the description was basically, ‘she’s super-hot.’ So it doesn’t narrow it down much,” Kate states.
“Well we know one thing,” I state making them all look at me in confusion, “It’s not Kate then.”
“Except for Wong, for second class Petty Officers, those guys have some pricey rides,” Tony says when Kate’s face goes red in anger at me.
“Put out an APB on Wong’s Taurus, and talk to Antwane Mann… two n’s,” Gibbs orders.
“Why would all four lie about who left with the woman?” Tony asks in confusion when they get back to the squad room.
“To protect Wong. Or the woman,” Kate tell him.
“Or themselves,” Gibbs and I state.
“From what?” Tony asks us.
“That is the forty thousand dollar question. We’re missing something. The evidence doesn’t make sense,” Gibbs says.

“Haven’t you already run every known terrorist through this program?” Kate asks Gibbs when she sees it is running on his computer.

“I’m running it again.”

“And he shouldn’t have to run it at all, if you had just stabbed the fucker when you had the chance,” I snap at Kate.

“We know Gordon was purposely run down in the parking lot, probably died from a fractured skull, and somebody had his body in the warehouse ceiling,” Tony states while getting us back on topic before someone gets hurt.

“The forty thousand we found hidden in his room gives someone a motive,” Kate agrees.

“A motive for who? For what? I mean, nothing ties into the money.”

“Do you want is to bring in Wong?”

“Nope. Not until we know where that forty thousand dollars came from,” Gibbs tells her.

“What do we do?” Tony asks Gibbs.

“The same thing Deep Throat told Woodward and Bernstein. Follow the money.”

“Something’s bugging me about the money. It’s not just forty thousand dollars in cash. It’s forty thousand dollars in non-sequential hundred dollar bills,” Tony says after working for quite a while.

“So?” Kate asks without caring about it.

“Well, why all hundreds? If it was drugs it wouldn’t be all hundreds. Or gambling, or even theft.”

“You’re right.”

“Where would you go to get all hundreds?”

“Bank.”

“Hmm. And what makes you go to a bank requesting non-sequential hundred dollar bills?”

“Ransom?”

“Blackmail?” I add.

“Blackmail’s good. Who was he blackmailing?”

“I have no idea,” Tony states while I just shrug me shoulder.

“This program rocks. It includes vault, fall, yaw, tip over, roll over, combined speed, linear momentum,” Abby rambles about the program.

“Abby,” Gibbs cuts her off.

“Oh come on, Gibbs. You know you love it when I talk tech.”

“What do you got?”

“Well, at first I thought the latex might have come from the car. But the latex primer used in the car is located in the undercarriage which never hit. So he had to have been wearing the latex.”

“We already knew that,” I state.

“Yes, but that was speculation. This is confirmation.”

“Okay, what else?” Gibbs questions Abby.

“I used the victim’s measurements and the location of his injuries to determine the height of the vehicle based on point of impact. And then I used a database for vehicle grill dimensions. Can you believe someone put together a database of vehicle grill dimensions?”

“Obviously they don’t get laid often,” I state.

“I was about to call Ripley’s,” Gibbs informs her sarcastically.

“I had this boyfriend once – not the balloon guy – but this one was like a computer genius. He put together a database. Well, it seems obvious in retrospect, like the pet rock,” Abby rambles on.

“Abby…”

“Yes?”

“You’re spending too much time talking to Ducky.”

“That means you are no longer afraid of autopsy,” I say to Abby making her smile.

“Okay, bottom line… the car that his Gordon was definitely a Taurus,” Abby informs us.
“You’re positive?” Gibbs asks Abby.
“Absolutely. Unless it was a Mercury Sable.”

“Tony. Did you check out all the Tauruses that have parking permits at PAX River?” Gibbs asks Tony while walking into the squad room.

“Ah, yeah. All except for Wong’s, which is allegedly somewhere between here and Phoenix. The A.P.B.’s haven’t turned up anything,” Tony informs Gibbs while turning from his computer which he and Kate are reading off of.

“Did you check Mercury Sables?” I ask him next.

“No,” Tony informs us but after a heartbeat he adds, “But they’re the same car. I have a list of permits here. Four sables have base permits. And this is interesting. Master chief Nutter drives a stable.”

“Why is that interesting?” Gibbs demands of Tony.

“We think that when Gordon found out that Nutter was taking kickbacks, he blackmailed him,” Kate informs us.

“It gives him motive, murder weapon and accounts for the cash,” Tony finishes for Tony.

“Easy enough to find out. All we have to do is look at his car. Let’s go,” Gibbs orders while grabbing his gun and walking to the elevator.

“Is the Master Chief around?” Gibbs questions Morgan when we get to the parking lot on the victim’s base and find the master chief’s car is not there.

“No, sir,” Morgan answers without hesitation.

“Know where we can find him?” I ask him next.

“He didn’t say where he was going.”

“Well what do you do if there’s an emergency and you need to get a hold of him?” Tony asks Morgan.

“We call his cell, sir.”

“Hey, abs. Gibbs,” Gibbs say into his phone after Abby answers the phone. “If I give you a cell phone number can you trace it and give me a location? How accurate? Do we got to jump through any legal hoops? How grey? How long does he have to stay on? Okay, here’s the number. Area code seven zero two, five five five, zero one two seven.” After a few seconds of silences Gibbs questions her, “Any idea what’s there,” and after she answers he hangs up the phone.

“Agent Gibbs, what are you doing here?” Nutter asks Gibbs when we get to Bartex Corporation.

“I was going to ask you the same thing,” Gibbs states without answering the question.

“Bartex is one of our vendors,” Nutter explains to us.

“And?” Gibbs and I ask him.

“Can we keep this between us?”

“Nope,” Gibbs states.

“They’re offered me a position with their company and I’m seriously considering taking it. I didn’t want to let anyone know until I made my final decision.”

“Pop the hood of your car.”

“Why?”

“Because he ordered you too,” I states to Nutter making him lean in and pop the hood of the car.

“No body work,” Tony states.

“The windshield is original equipment according to the manufacturer’s specs. It hasn’t been replaced,” Kate adds while looking at it.

“No way this car hit Gordon.”
Forty mile zone ended two miles back, boss. Limits sixty five. I only mention it because you usually drive slightly faster than Dale Earnhardt Junior. Boss?" Tony informs Gibbs while Gibbs drives the car down the road.

“What?” Gibbs snaps at her.

“Do you want to stop for a burger?”

“No!”

“Gosh, I would have bet a month’s salary it was Chief Nutter,” Kate says to cut the tension in the car.

“You would have lost,” Tony informs her.

“I always lose when I bet.”

“Don’t tell me. You had the cubs.”

“Red Sox.”

“Ah, she bet on the Sox, boss.”

“Not again. We are not going to lose again!” Gibbs says while doing a fast U-turn, resulting in all of us being pushed against the doors and each other. The pressure from Kate landing against me resulting in me having extra pressure pushed onto my injured shoulder making me groin in pain from it. “We are going back to that warehouse and we are staying until we nail whoever hit Petty Officer Gordon.”

“They lied about coming in one car. Wrong’s Taurus hit Gordon. They made up the story about his brother,” Gibbs says when they get out of the car once we get to the crime sense at the warehouse.

“They? Not Wong?” Kate questions him.

“They were in it together.”

“Okay, so they were all in a conspiracy to do what? Kill their buddy for forty grand?”

“Maybe. Or maybe they just wanted payback.”

“You lost me, Gibbs.”

“Me too, boss,” Tony adds.

“Tony, you check out this lot next door?” Gibbs asks Tony.

“Uh… a hundred meter perimeter search didn’t reach the lot.”

“Then we do two hundred!” Gibbs yells over him.

“What are we looking for?”

“Answers,” Gibbs answers Tony while throwing him the keys over his shoulder, before placing his hand on my back and leading me over to the fence. “How is your shoulder?”


“Alice. I notice, you have been favouring. Your shoulder is not fine,” Gibbs states while gently rubbing my injury shoulder.

“It’s tender. I’ll live.”

“Alice…”

“Gibbs, I’ll live, but I want that terrorist dead.”

“Get in line.”

“No, I am the line, everyone joined after me.”

“You hate him that much?” Gibbs asks me while opening the fence for me to walk through before him.

“Gibbs!” Kate says when she get to the fence, cutting off what I was going to say.

“Tony? Looks like our latex,” Gibbs states while looking at some court on the fence.

“Must have gotten snagged when somebody slipped through the fence into the parking lat.”

“Not someone. Petty officer Gordon. Okay, flash and bag it.”

“Any idea what this stuff is?” Tony asks Kate while they work together.

“Of course,” Kate answers him.

“What?”

“Evidence.”
“That’s a good one, Kate.”

“I don’t know, boss. This lot is trashed,” Tony states after we have been looking for a while and not finding anything.

“It’s got to be fresh, Tony. Less than forty eight hours old,” Gibbs snaps at Tony while kneeling down next to something on the ground.

“Wow, what you got, boss?”

“Maybe something.”

“Do you think that was left by our four musketeers?”

“Oh, yeah.”

“Damn it, Gibbs. If you know what happened, tell us,” Kate snaps out Gibbs.

“Patience, Kate. Patience. All right, keep looking everybody. Watch your step,” Gibbs orders while moving away.

“He doesn’t know.”

“What to bet?” Tony answers Kate.

“Kate, get a photo,” Gibbs calls out.

“Yeah,” Kate says while walking over to Gibbs.

“I’ve got some fresh butts over here. Petty officer Morgan smoked,” Tony calls out to us.

“And petty officer Carter.”

“We’ll get DNA from this. Looks like they had some kind of tripod over here.”

“Are you about ready to tell us what you’re thinking?”

“They filmed it,” Gibbs and I state but my tone of voice states that Kate is stupid for not working it out.

“Filmed what?”

“Not a pretty sight, is it?” Gibbs asks the four musketeers when Ducky opens the autopsy drawer.

“Did you have to cut him up like that?” Morgan asks us.

“Oh, yes. An autopsy is required in a murder investigation,” Ducky informs them.

“Sir, can I please be excused?” Carter asked while looking green.

“Oh, that chance ended three days ago, Petty Officer Carter,” I inform him.

“Twenty bucks Carter wets his pants before Morgan,” Tony bets with Kate from our spot in observation watching all four of them in one integration.

“Think this’ll work?” Kate asks Tony without taking the bet.

“Abby’s cleaning it up right now.”

“All right. Let’s do this,” Gibbs says while signing to me, ‘you stay here.’

“They never put four people in the same interrogation room – ever! Do you want to know why?” Tony asks when they get into the interrogation room.

“Because we don’t want them comparing stories or conspiring to hide the truth,” Kate answers Tony question.

“But in your case we’re willing to make an exception.”

“I know what happened. Now it’s just a question of time,” Gibbs cuts Kate and Tony off from his seat in front of the suspects while Kate and Tony just stand around.

“As in how much time you’ll spend at Leavenworth if you don’t cooperate with us,” Kate informs them.

“It was all a joke. It was just a stupid,” Carter states to explain.

“Shut up, Carter. I want a lawyer,” Wong cuts him off.

“You know, if I was you, Wong, I’d want a lawyer, too,” Gibbs states.

“What if we cooperate, sir?” Morgan asks Gibbs in fear.

“Morgan, all they have is a strip of rubber. If they can charge us, they would have already,” Wong informs his friend.
“What about your car, Wong?” Tony asks him.

“Do you know how hard it is to wash blood stains off a car these days?” Kate adds onto Tony’s question.

“Are you saying you have my car?” Wong asks them.

“Are you saying we don’t?” Tony asks him.

“There’s no way you have my car.”

“Are you sure about that?” Kate asks him.

“What is this, bad cop, dumb cop? My car is long gone. My brother…”

“I don’t need your car. I have this,” Gibbs cut them off while showing them a video tape.

“Never put anything on videotape that you don’t want to be seen,” Kate informs them while bringing in a TV to watch the video on.

“Just ask Paris Hilton,” Tony adds on.

“You had your chance to come clean. It could help with the sentencing,” Gibbs says while getting up to play the video.

“Wait. I’ll talk, sir,” Carter calls out to Gibbs.

“It was an accident. We didn’t think anyone was going to get hurt, sir,” Morgan adds on to in fear.

“Whose idea was it?” Gibbs asks them.

“It was Gordon’s, sir. He was planning it for months. It was payback for the time when Wong set him up on a blind date with a transvestite,” Bowman informs them.

“Don’t you see what they’re trying to do here? We have to,” Wong tries to get them to stop talking.

“Gordon is laying on a slab down there because of us, Wong.” Carter cuts them off.

“Yeah maybe you can live with that. I can’t,” Morgan adds.

“Who was the girl? Somebody’s girlfriend? Hooker?” Gibbs asks them while looking from one person to the next.

“She was a call girl, sir,” Bowman informs Gibbs.

“Who was in charge of the set up in the vacant lot?”

“It was me and Gordon, sir,” Morgan explains.

“Seems like you guys had it all organized. What went wrong?”

“Wong panicked, sir,” Bowman informs us.

“He was our best friend, agent Gibbs,” Morgan informs us.

“And we killed him,” Carter adds.

“That was a pretty good practical joke. Too bad your buddy died,” Gibbs states to them.

“It was an accident, sir,” Wong defends himself and his friends.

“What about the forty grand? Are you telling me no one knew about that?”

“Sir, none of us had any idea that Gordon had that kind of money,” Bowman informs us.

“We never should have tried to hide the body. But it was an accident, sir,” Morgan states.

“Is that true, petty officer Wong? No one knew about it?” Gibbs question him.

“The only thing I am guilty of here is manslaughter. You saw the tape,” Wong informs Gibbs.

“Is he talking about this tape, Tony?” Gibbs asks while flicking the tape between his fingers.

“I think he is, boss,” Tony answers Gibbs.

“Oh, this isn’t your tape.”

“But you’re in it, Wong,” Kate say while Gibbs puts the tape in and plays it, showing that it is a bank video.

“Twenty two year olds cashing forty thousand dollar inheritance checks is something bank tellers tend to notice. Hmm. You noticed it too.”

“It was… it was an accident,” Wong says.

“We have a witness.”

“Did Wong know that it was a prank?” Kate asks the call girl who is standing in the door way.

“Mm-hmm,” Zoe, the call girl, answers.

“How much was he giving you to keep your mouth shut?”

“A thousand dollars.

“He knew it was a prank?” Carter asks in surprise.
“He said his friends was trying to get even with him.”
“You knew it was Chris,” Bowman reminds Wong.

“Hey, you got any plans tonight?” Tony asks Kate and I after they finish their paperwork.
“I did. Too late now,” Kate answers him.
“Want to grab some Chinese at the new place down the street?”
“Sure. What to ask Gibbs? Kate asks, making us look over at Gibbs who is watching his computer.
“He’s busy.”
“Doing what?”
“Same thing he does every night.”
“You guys go without me, I have something I have to do,” I inform them when they wait for me to go with them.
“You’ll get him, you know. Go home and get some sleep, Gibbs,” I say to Gibbs once I walk over behind him after Kate and Tony left.
“I will later,” Gibbs says without looking away from the computer.
“Gibbs, not sleeping is not going to get him killed any faster,” I remind him while gently rubbing his tense shoulders.
“Alice, go home and get sleep.”
“I will when you do.”
“It’s three o’clock in the morning, you hear a strange noise in your house. What do you do?” Tony asks Kate as we walk out of the elevator.
“I slide a pistol from under my pillow and I go after the guy,” Kate informs him.
“I’m talking about real people, Kate. Why do they always feel the need to go and look?”
“It’s called human nature, Tony,” I state.
“Ah, let me guess. You’re that person in a horror movie that decide since all your friends are dead, you really need to go check out the demonic breathing noise in the basement.”
“No, I am the one making the noises to watch people scared.”
“Well, that beats being the girl who twists her ankle and gets everybody else killed,” Kate informs him.
“You sleep with a gun under your pillow every night?” Tony asks Kate.
“That depends.”
“On what?”
“Oh who I’m sleeping with,” Kate said while look at Tony and not where she is walk resulting in her walking into Gibbs chest. “Um, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean that the way it sounded. Tony just asked me what I would do if a man came into my bedroom and I said it depends. I mean, it doesn’t depend on the man. Tony, could you help me out here, please?”
“She sleeps with a gun, boss,” Tony throws Kate under the buss with Gibbs.
“Is that true?” Gibbs asks her while staring at her.
“Sort of. Sometimes. Yes,” Kate answers.
“Good girl! What do we know about last night?” Gibbs says before heading back to his desk and sitting down.
“Not much. The fugitive is a former SEAL names Jack Curtin. He somehow managed to escape from Leavenworth and nobody seems to know how.”
“We do know he broke into a house at zero three forty and scared the hell out of two civilians before stealing the guy’s clothes,” Tony continues.
“Get me everything on him… birth to last night,” Gibbs orders them.
“I thought Leavenworth was Army C-I-D jurisdiction?”
“C-I-D’s gonna search where he’s been. We’re gonna find out where he’s going. Have Leavenworth pack up Curtin’s cell, overnight it to Abby. I want everything but the paint on the walls.”
“You got it,” Kate says to him.
“Do we know what this guy was in for?” Tony asks Gibbs.
“Same thing I’m gonna be if you don’t get your ass moving,” Gibbs says while staring at Tony.
“Right,” Tony say while turn and walking back to his desk before whispering to Kate, “Murder?”
“And you didn’t even use a lifeline,” Kate says to Tony.
“Are you on a roll?” Gibbs asks Abby when we get to the lab after Kate and Gibbs went to where Jack’s son is living with his grandparents.
“Aren’t I always?” Abby ask him in return.
“Guess you don’t need this then, huh?” Gibbs ask her while holding up a caf-pow.
“Ooh. You need it. I like it,” Abby says while taking the caf-pow off of him.
“Kate get you the stuff from Curtin’s cell?”
“It’s on its way. Kate rules.”
“I thought Abby ruled,” I state.
“Good women don’t mind sharing a throne, guys.”
“Are we talking about the same Kate?”
“How about just sharing what you found Abs,” Gibbs cuts in.
“I will… when I find it. I’m still downloading the SAINT data from Leavenworth,” Abby says to
“Hmm. That’s one acronym I don’t know.”
“It’s like Lojack for inmates. It should be able to tell us when and where our chicken flew the coup.”
“I am much more interested in how and with whose help.”
“Got it.”
“Good.

Petty officer first class Jack Curtain… he’s hard core, boss,” Tony says to us once he gets back from talking to JAG.

“Yeah? What’s your definition of hard core?” Gibbs asks him.
“Grew up in foster homes. Enlisted at seventeen. Went from boot camp to BUS, which is unusual. Went through hell in Afghanistan, which apparently isn’t. His entire SEAL team showed up at his trial as character witnesses.”

“Where’s his team now?” I ask Tony.
“Mostly deployed.”

“Tony, I’m going to need you to do,” Gibbs startes but Tony cuts him off.
“…Track him down and see if Curtin contacted them? Or I could let you finish your question.”
“You have the name of the team commander?” I ask Tony.
“Current or past?”
“Both,” Gibbs orders him.
“Current’s location is classified. Sat-Com can be arranged as soon as he becomes available. When that will be is…”
“Classified,” Gibbs and I finish for him.

“Unknown. Past is stationed at little creek. Commander William Foley.”

“Where exactly at little Creek?” Gibbs asks him.

“Uh… there, exactly. It’s a brave new world, boss,” Tony says while pointing it out on the map that is on the screen.

“Well if he’s looking for help form an old teammate, he’ll have to go to Iraq to get it,” Foley, Jack old commander, informs us when we get to Amphibious base at little creek.

“You’re here,” Gibbs states.

“Hazards of promotion.”

“Did you have any contact with Curtin since his conviction?” I ask him.

“Not. Not that I’d avoid it. Jack was a good man.”

“He’s convicted of killing two people,” Gibbs states.

“Agent Gibbs, you know what it’s like to spend every free moment dreaming about being home again, hugging your wife, hearing your kids laugh, only to come home and learn it’s all gone?”

“It doesn’t justify murder.”

“I didn’t say it did. Anything else?”

“Not for the moment.”

“That’s very Jack Webb.”

“Thanks.”

“Curtin, definitely did his homework,” Abby informs us when we get back to the squad room.

“You got my attention, Abs. how’d he get out?” Gibbs asks her while walking over to his desk and sitting down.

“According to the computer, he didn’t.”

“I hate riddles,” I mumble loud enough for Abby and Gibbs too hear.

“SAINT tracks both inmates and guards through a single source data system with compares information on a digital smartcard that every inmate is required to carry with some aspect of their physiology.”

“How about an explanation that doesn’t required a digital smartcard?” Gibbs ask her.
“Okay. You got a fingerprint. You got a card. You swipe, you press, match-match. The computer knows who you are and where you are. The readers are in every cell and every entryway location within the prison. So there’s no need for bed checks or roll calls. You save time. You save money. Everybody wins.”

“Until an inmate hacks the system,” I remind her when she gets too excited about this technology. “Until an inmate hacks the system.”

“It was maximum security. They don’t get pencils, much less a laptop,” Gibbs states.

“Yes, but they do give them toothpaste. At first I thought he moulded a duplicate of his finger, but…”

“The guard’s finger.”

“That’s what I love about you, Gibbs. Always one finger ahead.”

“Find out which guard.”

“I already have. SAINT has the guard logged at the prison laundry for the last twenty two hours. Which is odd for several reasons, but especially because it was his day off.”

“Curtin used the fake finger to get to the laundry,” I summarise what that means.

“Then he hid in a hamper and went out with the whites.”

“How’d he get the guard’s finger to make the mould?” Gibbs ask the big question.

“Easy. Kicked sand in his face. Watch this,” Abby says while playing a video from the prison from before Jack escaped. “Curtin did a few fingertip pull-ups. And then challenged the guard to do the same,” Abby explains what we are watching.

“I’m guessing that’s not dirt he found above the door,” I state while watching it.

“And I’m guessing that you’re looking in the wrong direction just like the guard. Watch,” Abby says while playing the video again.

“So a finger he made of this fooled the computer,” Gibbs releases.

“The biometric reader note lines and ridges in three dimensions. They don’t check for a pulse.”

“The finger’s useless without the smartcard that goes with it.”

“The guard lost his card two weeks after Curtin arrived. In the incident report he claimed that his dog ate it.”

“That don’t work for me in the sixth grade.”

“You’re a late bloomer, Gibbs. It didn’t work for me in the second.”

“Sixth grade. It doesn’t work in kindergarten,” I overlap Abby.

“They don’t have a way to disable lost cards?” Gibbs asks Abby.

“They do. But they didn’t,” Abby states.

“Guess they figured, without the finger,” I trail off.

“Exactly.”

“Well, they fingered wrong,” Gibbs says making us smile.

“That’s bad, Gibbs,” I say.

“You tried the ‘my dog ate it,’ in kindergarten?” Abby ask me before asking me, “What did you do?”

“Alice,” Gibbs snaps when I don’t answer Abby but just smirk.

“I may have, bitten one of the other kids… And a teacher,” I state.

“What’s that got to do with the ‘dog ate it,’ line?” Abby asks in confusion.

“Well, my parents may have never, to this day, gotten the letter for them to talk to my teacher that gotten ‘bitten.’ That teacher hates me and I don’t know why.”

“You’re a bitter?”

“Only on days that end in Y.”

“Checkpoints up?” Gibbs ask McGee when we get to the street where Jack just got away.

“On all the major roads. APB went out on the car that he got away in at zero hour hundred. One of the deputies just found an old pick up with Missouri plates. Reported stole yesterday morning,” McGee reports to Gibbs as we get out of the car.

“Sounds like our guy’s,” Tony states.
“Impound it? Bring it to the garage?”
“No, there’s no time. Bag everything. Get it to Abby,” Gibbs orders McGee.
“Will do, sir.”
“Bag the windshield fragments, too,” I add onto Gibbs order.
“Get them to Abby. Then take photos. Both scenes,” Gibbs continues before he leads me into the house where Kate is.
“Curtin snuck in last night. I didn’t hear him. He came to say goodbye to his boy,” Kate explains to Gibbs when we get to the living room.
“And while he was saying goodbye?” Gibbs asks her.
“Did you get the chance to kill him and didn’t?” I question her making her glare at me.
“I was uh… tied up in the living room. He has my weapon. But I hit him with the shotgun,” Kate answers Gibbs.
“How bad?” Gibbs asks her.
“Don’t know.”
“Contact the ER’s in the area. Tell them to be on the lookout for a G-S-V and get them Curtin’s photo.”
“Okay.”
“Where’s the boy?” I ask Kate.
“In his room.”
“How is he?” I ask Gibbs after he talks to Kevin.
“Coping,” Gibbs answer me while walking to the car.
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“Where’s the stuff from Curtin’s car?” Gibbs questions Abby when we get into the lab.
“It’s there, but you’re gonna want to see this first. I haven’t done a precipitin yet, but unless someone else was shot recently inside the car that Curtin carjacked, I think Kate just unsealed our SEAL. First shot, too,” Abby rambles.
“How can you tell?” I asks Abby in confusion.
“See the crenelated marks? That’s caused from blood spray hitting a perpendicular surface at a pretty good clip.”
“How do you know it was first shop?”
“The first shot hit home and caused the blood to splatter inside the car. The second…”
“…Blasted the stained glass onto the street,” Gibbs finishes for her.
“Stained glass. It’s very spiritual, Gibbs. How severe a wound?” I question Abby.
“Hmm, from a close range blast with a double ought buck, and considering his position behind the wheel and the fact that he hasn’t turned up dead yet, I’d say that he probably just got grazed or he’s down to one arm. What are you looking for? Abby answers me for asking Gibbs who is looking through all the evidence.
“This,” Gibbs answer while holding up the evidence that is gloves and a map.
“It’s from the glove compartment.”
“Yeah. I’ve never known anyone who kept gloves in the gloves in there.”
“Well, now you do. Do you want to know why?”
“Abby.”
“I don’t like the sun.”
“Abby.”
So when I have to go put gas in my car, I have these vintage elbow length gloves…”
“Black?” I asks Abby.
“Yes. They match my back lace vintage parasol.”
“The gas station,” Gibbs asks Abby.
“Well, yeah. You can’t be too careful, Gibbs, and you can’t have an indoor gas station because of all the fumes.”
“Abby?”
“Yeah?”
“Can we move on?”
“Sure. That’s a map of Washington, D.C.”
“Mmm. A new one.”
“So?”
“This one isn’t. My guess is he didn’t know he had a D.C. map in the glove compartment, so he bought a new one.”
“Hmm.”

Kevin obviously thinks his dad is out to shoot somebody. He told me his dad is going to find someone then he’s going to give himself up,” Gibbs informs everyone once we get back to the squad room.

“Does he know who it is?” Tony questions Gibbs.
“No. he seems to know something about the plan after he finds him.”
“And if he does, he won’t tell us because Curtin is his father. No one while give up family, just to send them back to jail,” I state.
“If Curtin is like most roommates, he blames everyone but himself for his conviction,” Kate states.
“Well, you don’t clean up after yourself.”
“There is a new D.C. road map in the car he abandoned,” Gibbs informs them what he found with Abby.
“Both of the JAG lawyers involved in his trial have D.C. addresses,” Tony informs Gibbs.
“What about the judge?” I ask him.
“Curtin also did right by all three of them. Coleman didn’t even contest the post-traumatic stress diagnosis, plus the judge was lenient in sentencing,” Gibbs informs them.
“So who’s he after?”
“Curtin told me he shouldn’t have to run at all.”
“Why do you always have to bond with the bad guys, the terrorist, Curtin, Jane doe, no one is safe from your friend ship. I pity the bad guys at this moment,” I say making Kate glare at me.
“He’s always insisted he was innocent,” Gibbs said after shushing me.
“Why do you always have to bond with the bad guys, the terrorist, Curtin, Jane doe, no one is safe from your friend ship. I pity the bad guys at this moment,” I say making Kate glare at me.
“Very funny,” Kate states dryly.
“Maybe we should,” Gibbs declares.
“Are you kidding, boss?” Tony asks.
“Have you ever known Gibbs to joke?” I ask Tony.
“The repairman really was fixing the cable, the lawyer were professional, and the judge was fair. Maybe the one person that Curtin still has a beef with is the one who killed his wife. He’s not running. He’s chasing,” Gibbs releases.

Kate updates us when she get off the phone with another hospital.

“Nothing from area hospitals. Still checking smaller clinics as well as doctor’s offices,” Kate updates us when she get off the phone with another hospital.

“Nothing from the vets, boss,” Tony updates Gibbs.

“A-P-B on the car?” Gibbs asks while gently rubbing my back to calm me down.

“I’m tired of hearing people say that word. The next one who says it will get hit,” I snap.

“We thing Curtin’s innocent, right?”
“Maybe,” Tony answers her.

“Assume he’s innocent for the sake of argument.”

“Why?”

“Because I said to,” Gibbs orders her.


“If Curtin’s innocent and he’s going after the guy that murdered his wife and a cable repairman,” Kate theories.

“I don’t think he cares about cable repairmen.”

“If Curtin knows the murderer, why didn’t he say so when he was arrested?”

“He did. He said… he thought it might have been drug dealers.”

“Generic. Not Specific. He’s going out to get someone specific now.”

“He didn’t know,” I state what Kate just said.

“He found out who slit their throats while he was in prison,” Gibbs continues for me.

“What about the stuff that was in his cell?”

“It’ll be here in twenty minutes. But I have a list of everything that’s coming. Curtin’s cell had seven large file boxes containing appeals, police reports, detective notes, crime scene photos, phone records and an official trail record,” Kate reads off the report she has.

“He found something in one of these boxes that told him who killed his wife,” Gibbs states.

“If he’s innocent,” Tony states what he thinks about Curtin.

“We’re going to reinvestigate this case from top to bottom. Get both of those JAG lawyers in here. Kate, take prosecution. Tony, defence.”

“On it,” Kate and Tony say similarity.

“Central files. I need all our records on a murder case three years ago,” Gibbs say into his phone.

“Hi,” Kate say into her phone a second later.

“Petty officer first class Jack D. Curtin. I want to know who here investigated the case. No. no, you will not call me back. I’ll hold,” Gibbs says into his phone.

“McGee what are you still doing here?” I ask McGee.

“Um,” McGee fails to answer me.

“Can you form a sentence, agent McGee?” Gibbs ask him.

“The NCIS investigator was Special Agent Clay Williamson, sir.”

“That’s a good sentence. Too bad no one was recording,” I say the last bit in the tone of voice that someone uses on a baby as Gibbs hangs up his phone.

“He’s retired and living on a boat. Gets his mail every three months in Tahiti.”

“What kind of boat?” Gibbs and I ask him together.

“Uh… I don’t know, sir. But I was able to download his investigation form Central files.”

“I want the Evidence Custody document so we can get,” Gibbs says but McGee cuts him off.

“Already on it, sir. I can call Norfolk and have the evidence transferred here.”

“How fast?” I ask McGee.

“Joint Force Command has a helo shuttle to the Pentagon.”

“Do it,” Gibbs orders him.

“Okay. Yes, sir.”

“You don’t have to call me sir.”

“No, sir.”

“Lawyers!”

“Commander Coleman is unhappily on her way,” Kate informs Gibbs.

“The defence lawyer told me to shove it. The message was actually delivered by his assistant, but he assured me it was verbatim,” Tony updates Gibbs on what he has so far.


“Boss, he’s no longer at JAG. He’s a four hundred dollar an hour Beltway lawyer with really nice shoes.”

“DiNozzo, I don’t care. I don’t care if he’s wearing Armani or Prada or Ermin-something Zegna. Get his ass here!”
“Ermenegildo Zegna, boss. Just so you know.”
“Evidence is on its way,” McGee says before unconfidently adding, “Boss.”
“I’m going to own your house, agent DiNozzo,” Clare, the defence lawyer, threatens Tony while being lead into the squad room in handcuffs.
“I rent,” Tony states without caring about the threat.
“You know what the federal minimums are for aggravated assault under colour of authority, kidnapping, false imprisonment?”
“Well, you know, I don’t. But I’m sure my boss, Special agent Jethro Gibbs does.”
“Very subtle, DiNozzo,” Gibbs says while looking at the lawyer.
“Shooting him just seemed so ham fisted.”
“Whatever it takes. Un-cuff him so he can say hello to an old friend,” Gibbs orders making Tony turn Clare around to undo the cuffs while facing him to Faith, the other lawyer.
“I prefer him in cuffs,” Faith states.
“Wish I’d known that when we were at JAG,” Clare responds to her.
“I want every photograph, witness statement, lab report, autopsy report, and anything else you can find in these boxes re-examined. Petty officer Curtin may be innocent now, but if we don’t find who he’s after, he will not be for long,” Gibbs orders when we get to the evidence garage with the two lawyers.
“Wish I’d known that when we were at JAG,” Clare responds to her.
“Okay. If Curtin can prove he’s innocent, why didn’t he just tell the authorities?”
“Would you listen?” Curtin states the pissing contest again.
“No. but if I was innocent, I’d keep telling people until someone did. I wouldn’t escape from prison and go after the killer myself.”
“That’s why women aren’t allowed in the SEALs.”
“Because we think with the head on our shoulders?”
“They remind you of anybody?” Abby asks while laughing.
“No,” Kate and Tony answer in unison.
“Yes,” I overlap them.
“Me neither,” Abby says after Kate and Tony give her a confused look.
“Evidence from Norfolk. Top box is autopsy. The rest is evidence collected at the scene,” McGee cuts in.
“I’m on her,” McGee said before changing it when Gibbs stars at him with a look that says, ‘you better not be,’ too, “It. I’m on it, sir. Sorry.”
“No drug found in either victim’s blood. Special agent Williamson, who investigated, found he’s sailing a thirteen meter ketch, boss,” Tony updates Gibbs what he has found so far.
“He must be married. You can’t single hand a ketch,” Gibbs states.
“I take it you’re not building a ketch in your basement,” Kate says to Gibbs.
“Of course not. The basement’s too small.”
“That’s a shame. You need a bigger basement,” I inform Gibbs making him smile at me.
“You know, if I was getting five hundred an hour, I wouldn’t care how long this little side bar went
on, but since I’m pro bono, can we…?” Clare cut in.
“If all you care about is your money, why the hell did you become a JAG lawyer?”
“Special Agent Williamson had a drug tox screen done on the wife’s hair. Nothing,” Tony continues after Clare falls to answer me.
“Okay, Curtin’s drug dealer idea didn’t pan out. What did?” Gibbs asks.
“Curtin was convinced his wife was having an affair,” Clare informs us snidely.
“Petty officer Curtin was paranoid. First drug dealer did it. When that didn’t pan out, it was a lover,” Faith cuts in next.
“Was he paranoid?” Gibbs questions them.
“Yes.”
“No,” Clare overlaps Faith’s answer.
“Proof?” I ask them.
“Pass this please. The court appointed psychiatrist found Curtin experienced severe insomnia in Afghanistan,” Faith says while handing the file down to Gibbs.
“Who didn’t?” Gibbs asks.
“Sleep deprivation can cause paranoia.”
“So can a wife who’s cutting another guy’s jib,” Tony says.
“Curtin’s the type of guy who intimidates other SEALs. Who’s going to make a move on his wife?”
“Maybe she was the one making the moves,” Kate theories.
“Where are her phone records?” I asks everyone while looking for them.
“There’s nothing in them to indicate she had a lover,” Faith states in a snippy tone of voice.
“Unfortunately she’s right. I checked out every number that she called while he was overseas,” Clare agrees with Faith.
“Did you check her cell phone calls?” Tony asks them.
“She didn’t have a cell phone,” Faith answers him.
“That’s odd,” Kate states while looking at one of the files from the prison.
“Everyone has a cell phone,” I state.
“I have a cell phone,” Gibbs agrees with me in his own way.
“Well, she didn’t,” Clare snaps out of us.
“Evidently her husband thought she did. He subpoenaed every phone company in Virginia. Verizon, sprint, A T and T wireless and there’s more. These are subpoenas for prepaid cell phone providers. Floor four wireless, Bingham wireless, shark phone dot com, zo-phone dot com, no-phone dot com. Prepaid cell phone records for one Margaret Curtin from Upfront Phone dot com,” Tony reads out.
“And the date on the subpoena is four weeks ago,” Kate adds onto the end.
“Court’s adjourned. Thanks for your cooperation, counsellors. Special agent Todd will escort you out. Tony, get on those numbers,” Gibbs orders while grabbing the phone subpoena and leading me to the elevator.

“Hey Pacci,” Tony says when an agent walks into the squad room while we are working the case.
“Hey, Tony. How’s the shoulder?” Pacci asks Tony in return.
“Getting there.”
“You got a minute, Gibbs?”
“No, not really,” Gibbs answers him while getting up.
“Working a hot case?”
“Smoking!” Tony answers him.
“Tony, I’m going to check on Ducky, then Abby. Give me a call the second,” Gibbs starts.
“…I find anything, I got it, Boss,” Tony finishes for him.
“Pacci! What do you need?”
“Well, you’re busy. This is a cold case. What’s one more day?” Pacci tells Gibbs.
“If you say that, one Gibbs is always busy so you want ever talk to him, and two you will wait your whole life without getting the help you need,” I state before walking to the elevator with Gibbs.
“I think I’ve got something useful from his accent,” Ducky informs us when we walk into autopsy room.

“What?” Gibbs asks us in confusion.

“The terrorist. He had a definite Euro accent, but he occasionally used British syntax. I think his higher education was in the British Isles. Yeah, well that’s all I have for the moment on that bastard. But on the one who did these murders, I’ve just found something really useful. The M.E. misread the cause of death. You’re thinking it was so obvious. A massive loss of blood from a kitchen knife when he sliced them from ear to ear. The attack was so vicious that both victims were nearly decapitated.”

“That didn’t cause their deaths?” I ask Ducky softly.

“No. the M.E. missed that they both also… had fractures of the cervical spine.”

“Their necks were broken,” Gibbs states.

“Precisely. Yes. The killer incapacitated each victim with a violent, and most likely fatal, twist of the head,” Ducky explains while trying to demist it on himself.

“Duck, I get the idea.”

“Anyway, he slit their throats probably to cover up the fact that he knew how to kill with his hands.”

“Like a Navy SEAL,” I state.

“Yes.”

“Which brings us back to Petty Officer Curtin,” Gibbs reminds Ducky.

“I’ve said all along, he’s guilty,” Tony says when we get back to the squad room.

“Nothing in her cell phone records?” Gibbs asks without commenting on Tony’s comment.

“If she got that cell phone to call her boyfriend, then he was working at the video store, the grocery store, the hairdresser, the dry cleaner or directory assistance.”

“She only got the phone when her husband shipped out,” Kate adds on to Tony’s report.

“What’s the most frequently dialled number?” I ask them.

“Commander Foley’s house.”

“Curtin’s C.O.?” Gibbs asks them in surprise.

“Only he was in Afghanistan with Curtin. Mrs Foley confirmed Margaret Curtin called frequently, but it wasn’t unusual. All the wives did it,” Tony reminds her.

“The C.O.’s wife is a den mother when the unit’s deployed.”

“It’s a dead end, boss.”

“That cell phone log is the only record Curtin had that no one else did, and he got that just before he escaped,” I remind Tony.

“Whoever he is chasing is at one of those numbers. We just have to find out which one,” Gibbs orders them.

“Abby, do we have something liking Curtin’s wife to Commander Foley?” Gibbs asks Abby through the phone. “You got it. Can you find it? Is the magic in the board or in the hands that hold it? Fine. Have them call me when you find something.”

“Well. You agree to waive your Article Thirty One rights,” Gibbs states inside integration with Foley at night.

“I’ve got nothing to hide. I already told you I haven’t heard from him. I don’t expect to,” Foley informs Gibbs.

“Why not? You testified on his behalf at the trial. You seemed to be sympathetic to his situation.”

“Situation?”

“Coming home and finding his wife in the bedroom with another guy.”

“Well wouldn’t that bother you?”

“Oh, yeah. It bothered me a hell of a lot, only I chose divorce over murder.”

“I didn’t know that,” Kate says in the observation room where we are watching the interrogation.

“He’s lying, he’s establishing rapport through shared communication,” Tony tells her.
“Are you sure his lying? I don’t think so,” I comment.
“Of course I’m… no.”
“Of course I was coming home from a three month float in the Med, not six months in the war zone,”
Gibbs continues from his spot inside the integration.
“Wouldn’t make any difference to me,” Foley informs Gibbs.
“Actually, it was more like four and a half months for you. R-P-G broke your leg.”
“I was lucky. It killed petty officer Gomez.”
“When you come home, did you come home on crutches or a walking cast?”
“What does any of this have to do with petty officer Curtin?”
“It doesn’t. It has to do with his wife and who really murdered her and the cable repairman.”
“You think I killed them?”
“Did you?”
“You think I framed a teammate? A guy who would put his life on the line to save mine?”
“Maybe you didn’t mean to. If Curtin hadn’t come home exactly when he did, who knows what
direction this case might have gone in.”
“Jack Curtin is one of the most insanely jealous men I’ve ever met.”
“That’s not what you said at his trial.”
“I dint want to see him get executed.”
“Sorry. Uh… could I see you a second, Boss?” McGee asks when he sticks his head into the
interrogations.
“Oh, I can’t believe I’m seeing what I’m seeing,” Tony says from our spot before I walk out of the
observation room and into the hall to see what the hell McGee wants.
“Never interrupt an interrogation, McGee. Never,” Gibbs almost yells into his spot right in McGee’s
face.
“I’m sorry. I… i… I just… I just thought,” McGee stutters out to Gibbs in fear.
“To have a thought, McGee, you think! Were you thinking when you went into the interrogation
room?”
“Yes, sir. I think so.”
“Well, okay. What is so damn important?”
“Margaret Curtin wasn’t murdered by her jealous husband. She was murdered by her jealous lover…the same one that gave her herpes,” Gibbs inform Foley once he has re-entered interrogation after
McGee tells him what Abby and him found.
“I’m not answering another question until I talk to a lawyer. I want a lawyer now!” Foley snaps out
Gibbs.
“I hate to rain on your parade, but we still don’t have Curtin,” McGee reminds us what he things in
important once we get into the squad room.
“At least he won’t be able to kill Commander Foley,” Kate informs him.
“Well, if we go public that we’ve found his wife killer, there’s a good chance Curtin will turn himself
in if he’s still alive.”
“It doesn’t make any sense,” Tony suddenly says.
“What?” Kate asks him in confusion.
“Nothing. It just… it doesn’t make any sense.”
“Are you going to give it up, DiNozzo, or are you going to keep repeating yourself?” Gibbs asks
Tony.
“The calls from Curtín’s wife to the Foley house pretty much stopped after Foley got back from
Afghanistan.”
“Yeah, so?” I say to him.
“So if they were having an affair, wouldn’t the calls increase after he got back into town?”
“Well, they didn’t need to talk on the phone. They could see each other in,” McGee cuts in.
“Why did she stop talking to his wife?”
“Well maybe she couldn’t. Would you be able to talk to the spouse of someone you were having an
affair with? I mean, would a normal person?” Kate asks Tony.
“But she didn’t completely stop. McGee, did Foley spend any time in the hospital after he got back?”
“Yeah. He had surgery on his leg and then again for a staph infection,” McGee reads out to Tony.
“Right. The surgery was on November thirteenth, back in for the infection on the twenty first for… one, two, three – three days.”
“Yeah, you’re right. How’d you know that?”
“Because those are the only days Curtin’s wife made calls to Foley’s house after he got back.”
“Are you thinking what I think you’re thinking?” Gibbs asks Tony making me pull a disgusted face.
“I don’t know, boss. Are you thinking what I think you’re thinking?”
“Yeah.”
“Her lover wasn’t Foley?” I snap in disgusted.
“It was his wife.”
“I’m not sure I’d even mind,” Tony says the next morning while we are doing the paperwork for the case.
“You wouldn’t mind if your wife had an affair?” Kate says to Tony while looking at Tony in confusion.
“With another babe? I don’t think I would.”
“Okay, I know I’m going to regret this, but why?”
“Easy. With a guy I’d think… what’s he got that I don’t, but if it was a woman, I’d know. Plus there’s the whole… you know.”
“What?”
“…What do women… you know…”
“Oh, please! Why are guys so interested in women who by definition, have no interest in them?”
“There’s no such thing.”
“There’s no such thing as lesbians?”
“That’s not what I said.”
“Oh. You just think all lesbians secretly still want a man?”
“Not all of them.”
“Just the good-looking ones?”
“You’re putting words in my mouth.”
“Welcome to the wonderful world of DiNozzo,” McGee cuts in.
“So I guess you’re completely above such fantasies?” Kate asks McGee.
“Yeah. I am.”
“Believe it,” Tony states as a door opens and the red head is seen giving Gibbs something.
“Who’s that?”
“That’s a good question. Ask him.”
“She dropped off my glasses,” Gibbs states without anyone asking anything.
“Boss?” McGee asks Gibbs who kicks me out of his chair.
“Yeah, McGee?”
“It was really nice working with you again.”
“Same here, McGee.”
“Oh, by the way, there’s something that Tony and Kate have been meaning to ask you,” McGee say before leaving while Gibbs looks at Tony and Kate who look like they have no blood left in their face.
“They want to know who red is,” I state from behind Gibbs.
“Well, it is not their business,” Gibbs answers me while looking over the paper work I have been filing out.
“Special Agent Todd’s desk. I’m sorry, she stepped away,” Tony answers Kate’s phone.
“DiNozzo!” Kate hisses at him.
“May I ask whose calling? Um… one moment,” Tony ignores Kate.
“Hey!”
“Dwayne.”
“I do have voicemail.”
“You do, it’s called Tony,” I state making Kate glare at me while snatching the phone off of Tony.
“’What fun is that?‘” Tony asks Kate.
“Hi. Um… yeah. Me, too. Oh, yeah, I know where that is. Okay, great. I’m leaving now. ‘Bye,’” Kate says into her phone with her back to us like that made it so we can’t hear here.
“His name is Dwayne?” Tony asks in confusion.
“Yep, and his as ugly as his name makes him sound,” I inform Tony.
“You really need to get a social life of your own,” Kate hisses at Tony and me.
“Oh, I have a social life,” Tony informs Tony.
“What’s tonight?”
“No. Best of Jackass.”
“Hold on!” Gibbs orders when we get our gear to leave.
“What is it, boss?” Tony asks Gibbs in confusion.
“Chris Pacci was murdered.”
“The agent that sits behind me?” Kate asks while looking over to the agent’s desk.
“Detective Hanley,” Gibbs says when we get to the crime scene to investigate the murder of one of our own.
“Special agent Gibbs,” Hanley says to Gibbs.
“Thanks for the call.”
“When we ID’d him as NCIS, I assumed you’d want to take the lead.”
“I appreciate that. Who found the body?”
“The janitor and the security guard. They were alerted when a fire alarm went off on the fifth floor.”
“On our way up,” Tony says to Gibbs.
“We held off on taking their statements. Thought you’d want to do that.”
“Oh, Christopher, who did this to you? It’s easier to overcome the gore and inhumanity when you don’t know the victim. But it’s so hard to be detached when it’s one of your own,” Ducky rambles to poor Pacci.
“Should I start taking photos, Doctor Mallard?” Jason, Gerald’s replacement, asks Ducky.
“Yeah. Work goes on.”
“I called nine-one-one and someone left the building from the rear emergency exit, setting off the door alarm,” the guard explains to us in the stairway.
“Did the security cameras catch it?” Gibbs asks the guard.
“Um, they’re not installed yet. The building’s being retrofitted with a new systems and nothing’s online.”
“What time did Chr…”
“What time did the victim enter the building?” I ask the guard when Gibbs stops after starting to say the victim’s name.
“I don’t remember seeing him come in,” the guard answers me.
“Is there another entrance?” Gibbs asks him once he recomposed himself.
“No. he would have had to come through here.”
“How could you not see him?”
“Does this lobby get that busy?” I ask seconds after Gibbs finishes his question.
“He could have come in while I was signing construction workers out,” The guard explains to us in defence.
“I want a copy of their names and a list of the floors they work on,” Gibbs orders them.
“Yes, sir.”
“You’re letting people call you sir, that’s never happened before,” I say to Gibbs after the guard walks away.
“The bastard disembowelled him,” Gibbs snaps at in anger while looking at poor Pacci.
“Yes, but I don’t think that was the cause of death,” Ducky informs Gibbs while looking over the body.
“Is that a bullet wound?” I ask Ducky while pointing to what I am looking at.
“Yes. In the neck. Most likely pierced the carotid artery. It was quick death. He would have bled out in less than a minute.”
“Shouldn’t there be a lot more blood?” Gibbs asks Ducky while looking at the mostly clean elevator.
“If he was shot in the elevator.”
“You think it happened topside?”
“That would be my guess. But this… this slashing was done here in the elevator.”
“Rage or ritual, duck?”
“I don’t know, Jethro. Maybe after I’ve autopsied.”
“Chris asked me for help on a cold case. I was chasing Curtin and didn’t have time.”
“Jethro.”
“He said it could wait. What difference would another day make?”
“Jethro, this is not your fault.”
“Gibbs, don’t blame yourself. Blame the coward that killed him and then left him alone, dead in a pool of his own blood,” I order Gibbs while placing my hand on his shoulder because he is squatting next to Pacci.
“It feels like it is, Ducky” Gibbs says while giving me a thankful look for what I said.
“Gibbs while catch who did this and you can blame him.”
“You found a lot of blood,” Gibbs says while answering the phone. “We’re looking for a bullet.”
“God, Chris was so anal. I borrowed his stapler once. Put it back in the wrong place. Heard about it for days,” Tony says when we get back to the squad room after processing the sense.
“Give me his keys,” Gibbs orders while holding his hand out to Kate.
“Regs are to carry your weapon from portal to portal. Why’s he leave his here?” Kate asks Gibbs once he opens the drawer on Pacci desk.
“He was tailing somebody, going from place to place. Didn’t want to stop to identify himself or risk setting off an alarm.”
“We’ve all done it. Especially with the heavy security these days,” Tony adds onto the end of what Gibbs said.
“I’ll go over his case file. You two check out his house.”
“Tonight?” Kate asks Gibbs in disappointment.
“Yes, tonight!”
“I’ve just got to make a call.”
“Is there anyone you need to call, DiNozzo?” Gibbs ask Tony once Kate walks away to call her date.
“No, boss. No calls,” Tony answers Gibbs.
“What am I to do, Gibbs?” I asks Gibbs.
“Help me.”
“Did you get the bullet we found last night?” Gibbs ask Abby when we walk into the lab the next morning after working all night.
“I already ran it,” Abby informs Gibbs.
“What time did you get in?” I ask Abby.
“Four a.m.”
“Thanks, Abs,” Gibbs says softly to her.
“Well, Pacci was family. The slug looks pretty clean. From a three fifty seven. Based on rifling, it came from a smith and Wesson, model sixty six.”
“Very small and easy to conceal.”
“Yeah. I ran a comparison through NIBIN. I got nada. Looks like the gun’s a virgin, but I’ll keep searching.”
“Yeah. Abs, did Pacci ask you to do anything for him recently?”
“Not in a while.”
“He was working a cold case. Search the hard drive on his computer,” I inform Abby what we know before asking for her help.
“You got it.”

Put this back with the other,” Ducky says when we get to autopsy.

“What have you found?” Gibbs asks Ducky while gently placing his arm around my shoulders when I hesitate walking in autopsy.

“Well, as I thought, the bullet tore through the carotid artery. The massive loss of blood while fleeing his attacker was almost instantaneously fatal.”

“The slashing was done post-mortem?” I ask Ducky.
“I believe so. It’s hard to tell for certain. I mean, a three to four inch blade was thrust in here below the sternum and sliced down to here. These two more indiscriminate incisions were done next.”

“Same question, rage or ritual?” Gibbs asks Ducky again.
“Well, neither. I think the killer was looking for something. Here. There’s a small foreign object lodged here in the upper alimentary canal.”

“What is that?” I ask Ducky while looking at the x-ray of Pacci.
“I was about to find out when you came in.”

“Did Chris swallow this?” Gibbs asks Ducky.
“That would be my guess, Jethro.”

“Ducky, would this be hard to find without an x-ray?” I ask Ducky.
“Extremely.”
“Especially if an alarm was blaring and the attacker knew that security had been alerted,” Gibbs says as Ducky pulls the object out of Pacci’s body.
“Here was are.”
“What is that?”
“It’s a memory card, sir, from a digital camera,” Jason cut in with an explanation that just raises more questions.

“Why on earth would Chris swallow a memory card?” Ducky asks us everyone in confusion.
“He knew he was dying… and he knew you’d be doing the autopsy. Chris wanted you to find that. Dead man talking, Duck,” Gibbs explains to Ducky.

“I have a question,” I say making Gibbs and Ducky look at me before I continue to say, “What is on that, which is so important that someone killed an NCIS and cut him open?”

“Obviously they’re surveillance photos,” Abby says to us after pulling up the memory card out of Pacci’s body onto the plasma in the lab.

“Ooh, hottie,” Tony says when Abby opens the first photo.
“Don’t you think she’s a little too old for you, Tony?”
“No, she about my age.”
“That’s her point,” I inform Tony making him jump because he didn’t know I was standing behind him.
“Um… there’s nothing on the card but candids. Based on the date time stamp they were all taken in the past two days,” Abby continues to explain while smiling at me.
“I interviewed all the workers. Nobody remembers seeing Pacci or anything unusual. But one of them did find this. He found it at the bottom of the stairwell this morning,” Kate reports to us while holding up a camera.

“Chris’ camera?” Gibbs question Kate.

“NCIS issued. It’s gotta be his.”

“No memory card?” I ask Kate.

“Nope.

“Ok, sorry. Sorry I’m five minutes late. I had to park in the visitor’s lot and the guard,” McGee rambles to us when he runs into lab.

“Where is it, McGee?” Gibbs asks before snatching McGee’s briefcase and opens it to see what is in it.

“Special Agent Pacci wanted that ASAP.”

“What is it?” Kate asks us when looking at what us in McGee’s briefcase.

“It’s a civil investigation of an automobile accident in Buford County three years ago. A naval officer was killed. I read it last night.”

“I didn’t have breakfast this morning. You don’t mind, do you?” Tony asks McGee while eating his food.

“No.”

“Yes, Tony! Hi, McGee,” Abby snaps while taking the food of Tony and handing it back to McGee.

“I remember this case. Lieutenant Commander Voss was under investigation for credit card fraud. He stole over ten million dollars from the navy,” Gibbs summary’s the file he is reading.

“The guy that died before they could file charges?” Tony says while looking over the file in Gibbs hands.

“Yep. The money was never found. Case went cold.”

“Why was Pacci working it?” Kate asks.

“Found a lead on the money. It may be her. McGee!”

“Yes, boss,” McGee says to Gibbs.

“I want you on this. I’m going to get you T-A-D here. DiNozzo, you take McGee with you. You find out who she is and where she is.”

“Let’s go, hotshot,” Tony says to McGee.

“You need a place to stay?” Abby asks McGee before he can leave.

“Um… well… well…” McGee stutters out to Abby.

“McGee!” Tony calls out to him.

“Coming,” McGee says before leaving the lab.

“How’d he die?” Kate questions Gibbs without clarifying what she is talking about.

“What?” Gibbs and I her in confusion.

“Lieutenant Commander Voss, how’d he die?”

“He was burned to death,” Gibbs answers her.

“Why am I looking at three year old autopsy report?” Ducky questions us when we get to autopsy and hand him the photos.

“Kate’s idea,” I inform Ducky.

“Chris had this autopsy pulled, Doc. He must have suspected something was wrong in it,” Gibbs continues to explain to Ducky.

“I’d be very surprised of there were, Jethro. This was done by Hugh Putnam. He’s a very competent and thorough M.E. I’ve worked with him before,” Ducky explains to Ducky.

“Check it out anyway,” Gibbs orders Ducky before leaving with me following him while Kate says to talk to Ducky for a moment.

“You know, I already told Special agent Pacci everything I could remember about commander Voss,” Graves informs us in a passage way somewhere.

“When was that?” Gibbs questions him.
“That would have been Tuesday morning. You know, we get underway in two days. Can’t you get whatever info you need off of Agent Pacci? I can’t tell you any more than I already told him.”

“I’m sorry.”

“You were Lieutenant Commander Voss’ C.O. in Norfolk when he was under investigation,” Gibbs reminds the captain.

“Yeah, he was my command supply officer. And I’ve got to tell you I was shocked when the credit card fraud was uncovered and he was suspected.”

“Nobody else had access to the cards?” Kate questions him.

“There’s a thousands of military and civilian employees who had access to those cards. That’s why he was able to pull it off.”

“I don’t understand.”

“In order to cut down on the cash disbursed, the D-O-D issues credit cards. A phony company was set up making small charges against a vast number of these accounts, accounts that commander Voss had approved.”

“How’d he get caught?” Gibbs inquires of him next.

“Well, he didn’t for almost four years. Then he decided to expand his scam to bilk the entire Atlantic Fleet command. He got over twelve million before finally somebody noticed anything.”

“What happened to the money?” Kate ask the question we are all thinking.

“Nobody knows. When commander Voss died, all he had was saving that were reasonable for a Lieutenant commander in the Navy, which is why I’m not certain he did it.”

“What did Pacci ask you?” I question him next.

“He didn’t ask me anything about the scandal. All he wanted to know was who Voss had dated. And I didn’t know.”

“How’d it go?” Tony questions Gibbs when we walk off the elevator.

“Tell me you have her name, DiNozzo,” Gibbs orders without answering Tony question.

“Any second, boss. I’ve got an address. I’m running it through the search engines.”

“How’d you find it?” Kate questions Tony.

“Process of elimination, actually. Here it is. Amanda Reed.”

“Background her. Deep as you can go. Come on, Tony. McGee, good work on the address,” Gibbs cuts in.

“Oh, thank you, boss,” McGee says while Gibbs takes a sip of coffee and spits it straight beck out which results in Kate laughing at him.

“Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, okay. Thanks for that,” Tony says into his phone while standing on the street that the woman lives on before turning to Gibbs and informing him, “Well, Kate can’t find any criminal record. In fact, Amanda Reed sounds like an upstanding citizen. Single, real clean TRW. She just brought this townhouse. Paid cash. No mortgage. She… recently was accepted to the Potomac country club as a member.”

“I’m impressed,” Gibbs answers sarcastically.

“Do you want me to do the interview?”

“No.”

“I can work her, boss.”

“Chris was keeping his distance for a reason. Until we find out why, we do the same.”

“Why?”

“This photo was taken from up there,” I point out before Tony can start begging to talk to the woman.

“How’d you find it?” Gibbs asks a man sweeping the sidewalk in front of the apartments.

“Excuse me, are you the building manager?” Gibbs asks a man sweeping the sidewalk in front of the apartments.

“No. I got a thing for sweeping sidewalks,” Norm, that man sweeping the sidewalk, answers Gibbs very sarcastically.
“Is this your apartment still for rent?”
“Are you guys… together? With a daughter?”
“No, it’s not what you think,” Tony says with a stiff laugh about that thought.
“NCIS,” Gibbs answers while flipping his badge to Norm.
“Oh. The guy the other day showed me a badge just like that,” Norm exclaims while looking at the badge.
“Did he rent it?” I ask him.
“Nah, he just took some pictures inside and said he’d get back to me.”
“We’d like to see the apartment,” Gibbs says to Norm.
“To take pictures or to rent it?”
“To rent.”
“Oh, all right.”
“We’re going to pick up where Chris left off. Stake out time,” Gibbs says once Norm walks away.
“Yes!” Tony shouts while throwing his arms into the air in excitement.
“I haven’t been on a stakeout for a long time. I’m looking forward to this,” Tony exclaims when we are in the squad room later the same day.
“Figures. You’re a voyeur. You like spying on people,” Kate says to him.
“And this is legal.”
“Would you be as excited if the mark was a three hundred pound bald guy?” Kate questions Tony.
“So, what she is saying is, would you be as excited if the mark was Kate,” I state without a care in the world about the stare Kate is throwing my way.
“Nope,” Tony answers Kate while grinning at what I said.
“What’s you find out?” Gibbs questions Kate and Tony once he walks into the squad room with a coffee.
“DiNozzo?”
“A connect between the dead Commander Voss and Amanda Reed. I ran a title search on the townhouse she just bought. It’s too much to be a coincidence,” Tony report to Gibbs without reporting anything.
“Are you going to spit it out, or do I have to waste my coffee on your head?”
“Why can you waste your coffee on Tony head but when I tried to do that to Kate you get up me? And don’t waste the coffee, if you don’t want it that bad, just give it to me,” I cut in before Tony can answer with an insulted tone of voice.
“The house was in the Voss family for three generations. The commander’s father lost it in a bankruptcy in seventy nine. I got a call in to the real estate agent who sold it to Amanda Reed. Waiting to hear back from her,” Tony finishes to report what he has found when it becomes apparent Gibbs won’t answer me.
“Can I have the coffee know that Tony has answered you?”
“Kate, Alice and I will take the first shift. You and McGee will relieve us at nineteen hundred,” Gibbs orders us.
“I don’t want to spend that much time with Kate.”
“Yeah,” Tony says without confidence about the arrangement.
“Problem?” Gibbs questions Tony while giving me a look.
“Well…”
“You really want to do that to McGee? Special agent Bligh here is going to eat him alive,” Kate exclaims to Tony.
“McGee looks up to me as a mentor.”
“The only way anyone looks up to you is as a walking STD caring, man whore, science project,” I explain to Tony slowly like I am talking to someone who is slow.
“Uh!” Kate over laps me.
“You want to be stuck in a cramped apartment with DiNozzo? Be my guest,” Gibbs informs Kate.
“Yeah yes. Good bye Kate, hello person who can’t say a full sentence,” I exclaim making Kate give me another look.

“On the other hand, it’ll help McGee build character,” Kate says then.
“All set, boss. The secured phone line is installed and the surveillance equipment is loaded in the van,” McGee reports to Gibbs.

“Good,” Gibbs states.

“Special Agent Pacci filled out a requisition for the same equipment and never picked it up.”
“Yeah. We guessed that,” I inform McGee that what he said was stupid.

“Let’s go, Kate, Alice,” Gibbs orders while heading over to the elevator while Kate talks with Tony for a moment.

“Hey, Abs, are you there?” Gibbs asks into the radio once we are settled into the apartment for the stake out.

“Yeah, Gibbs. I finally got the link working,” Abby responds to Gibbs.

“Our lady’s back,” I say while watching the woman return to her house.

“Yeah, I saw her. I finished pulling the last two weeks off Pacci’s computer. There wasn’t a lot there. Like a lot of older agents he wasn’t very computer savvy.”

“Send me the files,” Gibbs orders her without the bit he uses on everyone else.

“Well, you know how to download them?”

“Don’t go there, Abs.”

“He can’t but that’s why he has me. I do the computer crap and he drinks coffee,” I explain to Abby making her laugh at me.

“Touchy. Can we do a sound check on the laser-mic?” Abby asks Gibbs but there is still laughter in her voice.

“Sure,” Gibbs says while putting on some headphones and aim the mic at the woman’s house.

“Where’s she go?” I question Kate once she gets back to the apartment.

“Starbucks. Seems to be a regular. Non-fat, Grande, foamy latte. Them to a pharmacy to pick up a prescription,” Kate reports what she watched the woman do.

“Mmm, I think she’s running water,” Gibbs says from his spot beside the window.

“Oh, yeah. I hear it loud and clear,” Abby agrees with Gibbs.

“Well, the lady’s got expensive taste. The purse is Prada. It’d cost me a month’s pay,” Kate says.

“Well if you stopped paying men to have sex with you, you can have it faster,” I state making Kate try to stab me but I step back behind Gibbs.

“Anything?” Kate asks Gibbs once they swapped places so Gibbs can go through what is on Pacci’s computer that I have printed off for him.

“Nope. Abby was right. Chris didn’t leave much of a computer trail. He was surfing the website of a Bangkok visitor’s bureau, but I cannot figure out why,” Gibbs answers her.

“I’ll get it,” I say once I hear a knock on the door.

“Miss me?” Tony asks me while walking in with a bag of stinky food.

“Yes, I miss you, just like I miss that fucking terrorist. But Kate failed to stab you both.”

“What’s that?” Kate questions Tony while finally hitting me on my right arm.

“Dinner. I’m trying to broaden Special Agent McGee’s palette,” Tony answers Kate.

“It stinks!”

“It smells like Kate’s ‘date,’” I state while moving away from Kate to next to Gibbs where it is safer.

“What did you two find out?” Gibbs questions Tony and McGee.

“Well apparently Chris knew that Amanda had a thing for the Voss family home. He’s been keeping an eye on it,” Tony explains to Gibbs.

“What’s Amanda Reed’s link to Voss?” I ask Tony in confusion.

“I researched Amanda Reed’s prior residences. Her last known address was Virginia Beach,” McGee attempts to us.
“Which is eight miles from Norfolk where Lieutenant Commander Voss was stationed,” Tony cuts McGee off.

“Before that she lived in Jacksonville, Florida.”

“While he was at May-port Naval Station… ten miles away.”

“Prior to that, Amanda Reed lived in La Mesa, California…”

“Just outside of San Diego while he pulled duty at Coronado.”

“Well, they knew each other,” Kate states.

“Sounds like more than knew to me,” Gibbs responds to her.

“Good work, huh, boss?” Tony begs for praise from Gibbs.

“Tomorrow’s garbage day. I’m sure she’ll take her trash out tonight. Go through it.”

“Right.”

“And by the way, Tony, there’s only one bathroom. It’s clean now. I want to find it that way when I get back,” Kate orders Tony while we get our gear to leave for the night.

“What do you think I’m going to do?”

“I’ve seen you fire your weapon. I don’t trust your aim.”

“Well at least he took the target out, not froze up and let a terrorist get away after he shot one of our own,” I snap out Kate in anger that she can forget that, while Gerald’s not even out of hospital yet before leaving the room after Gibbs.

“How was the memorial service?” Tony inquires of us once we walk into the apartment the following day.

“The director gave a nice eulogy,” Kate answers him while looking around the apartment for something.

“Did anything happen?” Gibbs questions the two agents that was on duty last night.

“Noope! Not a thing, boss,” McGee denies very quickly.

“Very quiet,” Tony agrees with McGee while giving him a look.

“Is that why you seem so anxious, Agent McGee?” I inquire of McGee while giving him a look.

“Me?” McGee squeaks out.

“Is someone else here?”

“What did you do to him?” Kate demands of Tony.

“Nothing,” Tony answers him defensively.

“This place looks too clean.”

“What do you think they would do? Prank you while you are partnered with Gibbs? They don’t have that big balls,” I inform her.

“Excuse me,” Kate says when her phone rings before answering it softly while walking away from us.

“Where is she now?” Gibbs demands of Tony.

“Uh… in the back of the house. In the kitchen,” Tony answers him while looking where Kate walked off too.

“Did you check her trash?” I question McGee.

“Uh, yes. And nothing unusual,” McGee answers me.

“Have it sent to Abby for prints,” Gibbs orders.

“I had a great time, too. Oh, I can’t. I can’t tonight, Dwayne. But I promise I’ll make it up to you this weekend. I’ll call you back,” Kate whispers into her phone but Tony has the microphone pointed at her.

“Kate, Tim called asking if you are still on for tonight?” I call over to Kate before she can hang the phone up.

“DiNozzo! Alice!” Kate snaps out us.

“Sounds like Dwayne’s in love,” Tony says with a sickly sweet tone of voice.

“Yeah, with a coward who let a terrorist get away after he shot one of our own,” I snap while rubbing my shoulder where the bullet went through.

“Permission to shoot them?” Kate snaps while looking to Gibbs for the permission.
“No, you already got me shot once, I am not getting shot again because or from you.”

“Mm-hmm,” Gibbs says to Kate without hearing what she said because he is watching the woman’s house.

“Hey Gibbs, are you there?” Abby asks Gibbs through the phone.

“Yeah, Abs. what’s up?”

“You rule!”

“I know, but remind me why.”

“Abby, don’t say that. Or his head with get as big as Tony’s,” I overlap Gibbs making Abby smile.

“For wanting the DNA retested,” Abby explains to Gibbs while smiling even bigger at us.

“You can’t have the results yet,” Gibbs informs her.

“Oh, no. I didn’t run it.”

“Ahhh. Damn it. I’m not in the mood!”

“Abby! Chill, Gibbs. I dint have to. The crispy critter from the crash in type O positive. Lieutenant Commander Voss AB negative.”

“Voss is alive?” Kate ask Abby in surprise.

If he’s an alien with shifting blood types.”

“Are you sure, Abby? I mean, I read about someone’s blood type changing after someone gets a transplant. I can’t remember what type of transplant,” I say while snapping over the fact I can’t remember what type of transplant.”

“He’s alive with all those millions,” McGee overlaps me in shock without hearing what I said.

“Living la dolce vita. Lucky bastard,” Tony agrees with McGee while giving me a look but failed to comment on it while Abby just gives me a look.

“Not for long,” Gibbs states.

“Geo-tech lab is your next right,” Kate inform Gibbs while we sit in the car as Gibbs drives which results with Gibbs giving her his star, “I just thought you might… I don’t know,” Kate attempts to explain to Gibbs why she said but half way thought Gibbs takes the corner without slowing down making us all slide to the left, “Miss it.”

“What I’m missing is talking to that tech who DNA certified that body was Lieutenant Commander Voss,” Gibbs snaps.

“I have a question,” I cut in and when Kate looks back at me and Gibbs glances at me through the mirror I add, “Why has the last few case had a man who has faked his death successfully? And that fucking terrorist faked being dead too.”

“I don’t know,” Gibbs answers me thoughtfully.

“Call him and ask,” Gibbs orders her.

“Joshua Lurie, please,” Kate says into her phone before asking Gibbs, “Do you think they made a clerical error?”

“Nope.”

“People make mistakes, Gibbs.”

“Just ask Kate she is a pro at it,” I inform Gibbs while trying to tie Kate’s hair in a knot.

“Like backseat driving?” Gibbs overlaps me.

“I’m in the front seat,” Kate says with what she thinks is an innocent smile before talking into her phone, “Ah yes, Joshua Lurie. When?”

“He’s dead,” Gibbs and I ask without caring.

“Two years ago in a car crash,” Kate answers him while Gibbs brings the car to a screeching halt.

“Oh, my god. I can’t believe it. Hamilton Voss and josh Lurie graduated from the same high school in the same year,” Kate exclaims while reading it off her computer in the squad room.

“So, would you lie about who is dead for your class mate? I wouldn’t,” I state from my spot behind Gibbs at his desk.
“That clichés it. Voss is alive. He faked his own death in an accident where his old schoolmate would make the DNA I.D.” Gibbs states.

“You didn’t answer my question.”

“For which Voss killed him?” Kate question Gibbs while giving me her patterned look of anodynes. “Yeah, why not? Voss killed whoever really burned in that car crash. Murdered Chris when he found out he was tailing him. He caught Chris trailing him. Maybe he’s on to us,” Gibbs answers her.

“May I point out the similarity between this case and the one with the left leg? What was his name? Darn? Dan? Don? Dorn? Dorn that’s right,” I state making them think about it.

“Put DiNozzo on,” Gibbs orders into the phone once he rings it, “Where is he, in the head? Well what the hell is he doing there, McGee? Have Abby patch the video feed from the stakeout up here,” Gibbs orders Kate before talking to McGee again, “McGee, you listen to me. Voss is out there somewhere watching us watch Amanda.”

“String-fellow?” Kate question everyone once we have the video feed running in the squad room. “I’m going to wait outside,” Tony says from the lady’s house. “Did you get that? Paddy’s pub,” Tony questions McGee outside the house before whispering something to McGee.”

“Yeah,” McGee answers. “Hey boss,” Tony says after taking the phone from McGee but not before some more whispering. “DiNozzo, what the hell are you doing?” Gibbs snaps at Tony while glaring at the video feed like Tony can feel it.

“I had an opening. It was a clear field. I had to go for it.”

“Good.”

“Good?”

“Yeah. Good, Tony. You’re the bait, okay? Voss is out there somewhere you like he watched Chris.”

“Like he watched Chris?”

“Enjoy your date and stay out of elevators,” Gibbs orders Tony before ending the call and saying to Kate and me, “Let’s go.”

“His in a rush. Abby?” I ask Abby who almost run me over in her rush to get to Gibbs. “I ran the prints from Amanda Reed’s garbage,” Abby inform us in one breath before Gibbs grabs her shirt and pulls her into the elevator, “What the hell is wrong with you two?”

“Tony made contact with Amanda. They’re going to pub. And Commander Voss is probably stalking Tony,” Kate explains to her.

“Ok, really,” Abby says with a big smile. “That’s not funny. He’s probably killed Pacci.”

“Amanda murdered Pacci.”


“Aby!” Gibbs and I say tightly. She’s my daughter. My sister. My daughter. My sister. My daughter. Every print that I pulled off all those cosmetic jars you gave me come from one person.”

“Amanda Reed,” Gibbs states.

“Yes and no.”

“Aby.”

“They belong to Lieutenant Commander Voss. Amanda is Voss!”

“She’s a he?”

“Yes!”

“Oh my god! Tony’s on a date with a guy,” Kate exclaims making me loss my battle with myself and bust out laughing at that very thought.

“Yeah.”
“He’s not answering,” Gibbs snaps when Tony’s phone rings out while driving the car at spend. “Maybe he can’t,” Kate says to him making his temper even worse. “Why didn’t you answer your phone?” Gibbs demands of Tony when he ring him, “Where’s Amanda? Well, we can add that misdemeanour to the murder charges? Amanda is Lieutenant Commander Voss, DiNozzo,” The second Gibbs says this I start laughing again, “She’s a he bonehead. And if he is packing a three fifty seven and a knife in his purse, he killed Chris,” Gibbs updates Tony before hanging up. “His name was Special Agent Chris Pacci. And he was a friend,” Gibbs inform Voss/Amanda/the woman when she runs away from Tony once she releases that Tony knows who she is but Gibbs just pull the trigger resulting in a bullet tearing her head. She is dead before she hits the ground. “Federal agents! So re those two! Let them go,” Kate calls out to the men whose Tony and McGee. “Let me go,” McGee agrees while removing his arms from their arms. “He didn’t have a chance. Why’d he try?”

“Why are you going through everything before you box it?” Kate questions Gibbs from where we are watching him pack Pacci’s desk. “Force of habit. I don’t want his family getting an unpleasant surprise.” “That reminds me of the crying game,” Abby says loudly to McGee while walking over to us. “Don’t know it,” McGee inform her in confusion. “It was such a cool flick.” “Abby, could you pick some other movie, please?” Tony inquires of him. “Oh, um… Victor, Victoria.” “That was a girl, pretending to be a guy, pretending to be a girl.” “Right.” “Yeah, that one’s okay.” “You gotta hand it to Commander Voss. In three years he hid in plain sight as a woman,” McGee says what we are thinking. “Well, he wasn’t a woman yet. The surgery was scheduled for next month in Bangkok,” Kate inform them. “Getting your plumbing turned outside in is so…” “Hinky?” Tony and I offer. “No, no. way beyond hinky. It’s…” “Speaking of way beyond hinky, Tony,” Kate cut in while turning to Tony. “Okay. All right, give it to me, Kate. I can take it,” Tony said while squaring up to her. “What was it like… tonguing a guy?” “Forget it. I can’t take it,” Tony says before walking away. “Gibbs are you alright?” I ask him softy once Kate, Abby and McGee follow Tony. “I’m fine,” Gibbs answers me. “Don’t lie to me Gibbs, he was your friend and you blow him off. So tell me how are you?” “I’ll be fine.” “Better, I guess it’s all I get from you. If you need to talk to me, I am always able to listen to what you need.” “I know. How are you?” “I… I… I need coffee.” “Me too,” Gibbs says with a bit of laughter. “I’ll get the coffee but you have to find food to go with it. Because I have noticed that you haven’t eaten today,” I inform Gibbs while pointing at him. “What are you, my wife?” “If I was, Tony wouldn’t work here, he is bad for you because he makes you angry which will reduce your life spaned. And you are the last of the people who raised and killed the dinosaurs.”
“I thought you couldn’t type,” Kate says when she walks into the squad room and see Tony typing at his computer.
“I’ve decided to improve myself,” Tony informs her without looking at her.
“Well, in the case, you might want to lose that shirt. It went out of style three years ago.”
“This from a girl who keeps a pukka shell necklace in her purse.”
“My grandma gave me those. Wait, you look in my purse?”
“Everyone looks in your purse, but in Tony’s defence he was looking for a condom,” I input in the conversation.
“Sorry, did I say that aloud?” Tony overlaps me.
“’Tony, you are so lucky you didn’t have sisters growing up,” Kate informs him.
“Why is that?”
“Because you’d never reached puberty.”
“What do you mean, ‘reach puberty?’ he still has and he is almost as old as Gibbs and you combined,” I cut in while Kate walks behind Tony to see what he is doing only to see he is playing a game.
“Very professional.”
“It’s my lunch break,” Tony defends himself.
“It’s nine-thirty in the morning.”
“I’m on Greenwich Mean Time.”
“You’re going to be dead if Gibbs catches you doing that,” I inform Tony from my spot behind Gibbs desk while going through his email.
“Catch him doing what, Alice?” Gibbs asks me while walking over to me.
“Jerking off at his desk?”
“Kate, is that true?”
“Nothing. Um… I was just giving Tony here some fashion advice,” Kate answers Gibbs without telling him the truth.
“On what?”
“Oh, he was just thinking about… getting both of his ears pierced?”
“That right, DiNozzo?”
“I think Kate misunderstood, boss. What I was really talking about was elongating the lobe,” Tony tries to lie to Gibbs.
“Hey, if you want to look like a gay pirate, that’s your call.”
“I thought you were going to an anti-terrorism conference today, Gibbs?” Kate cut in making me give him a look.
“Change of plan. A marine Gunnery Sergeant didn’t show up for duty this week.”
“Since when do we track down U-A Marines?” Tony questions Gibbs while closing the game.
“Since he’s one of a handful of people who know how to arm small yield nuclear weapons. His S.R.B. I’ve got forty-five minutes to memorize it. And Tony? If that game’s still on your computer in the morning, I’ll pierce your ears myself.”
“Can you do my ears too?” I question Gibbs softly while pulling up the file for Gibbs to memories.
“No.”
“No fair. Do you want a coffee while you are memorising this?” I softly as Gibbs while getting out of his chair but he doesn’t answer me but give me his signature look that says, what do you think?’ so I add, “Okay, I’ll get you one and something for you to eat.”
“Since Friday night,” Vanessa answers him.
“Five days? Why wait so long to report it?” Kate questions her in confusion.
“Figured somebody got lucky, went home in a different car. Happens around here a lot.”
“I’ll bet it does. The guy we’re looking for is a Marine,” Tony adds into the conversation.
“Yeah. We get a lot of those around here. Me? I like a man with hair.”
“What about him? His name is Gunnery Sergeant Bill Atlas,” Kate questions her while showing her a photo of the missing Marine.
“Yeah, sure. He was here Friday night. Is he all right?”
“That’s what we’re trying to find out.”
“Was he here with anyone?” Gibbs questions her.
“What makes you say that?” I questions her.
“Because he went out the back and she went out the front.”
“Kate you stay here. Get a description of the woman and check out his pick-up truck. DiNozzo, you’re with me,” Gibbs orders while placing his hand on my back and lead me to the parking lot where the car is parked.
“Any chance Atlas decided to walk away from it all?” Tony asks once we get to the parking lot after having to catch up after talking with Vanessa.
“Then it doesn’t look good for him. Statistically, most bodies turn up dead after four days.”
“Four days, huh? Really, DiNozzo. Thanks for sharing,” I snap at Tony.
“Well, I know you know. I’m just saying…”
“I’m not big on statistics,” Gibbs informs Tony.
“I kind of figured. I mean, since most marriages end in divorce, and you’ve been married three… maybe it’s like the waitress said, he got lucky.”
“Spread out. I want to know why Atlas never got back to his truck,” Gibbs orders when we get to the pick-up truck/ Tony states taking photos of the truck while Gibbs and I look around. “DiNozzo! Hey! Get your butt over here.”
“Is he always like that?” Vanessa questions Tony while giving Gibbs a look.
“Uh, only when he’s awake,” Tony asks to the best of his ability.
“Atlas was forces to leave here. No marine would leave a Zippo like this behind,” Gibbs states while getting Tony to photograph it before bagging and tagging it.
“I’ve got an unsmoked cigarette here.”
“Bag it.”
“What’re you thinking, boss?”
“Wherever Atlas is… his luck is running out.”
“Not if we can help it. We while find him, don’t worry Gibbs,” I say softly into his ear while leading on his back gently.

“i’ve got a rough sketch of the woman Atlas was having an affair with. It’s not much to go on, but if he was having an affair with a married women then we have a motive for someone wanting him to vanish,” Kate says when we return to the bar while showing us a sketch of the woman.
“Pull his phone record. See if we can’t match that face with a phone number,” Gibbs orders her.
“I already made a request for the subpoena.”
“Oh, DiNozzo. He’s about a step from vanishing himself,” Gibbs say before shouting over to Tony, “Hey!”
“Gibbs, if Tony vanishes, can I have his gun?” I ask Gibbs.
“Ciao, Bella,” Tony says to the woman who he is chatting up.
“See you,” the woman say when Tony walks over to us.
“I got her name, boss.”
“Do I look like I care, DiNozzo? Let’s go,” Gibbs snaps the order at Tony while getting ready to leave the bar.
“The woman with Atlas, her name’s Carol Powers. I got the waitress to remember she paid using a
credit card. She’s a reporter for the Post. I can have her in our office in an hour if you’re interested,” Tony explains to Gibbs.

“Good job.”

“Oh my god. Tony got the praise he always begging for,” I state.

“I’m sorry, boss. Did you say something? Did he just say something, Kate?” Tony overlaps me but when he hears me, he give me a glare that is nowhere as good as Gibbs.

“Don’t push it, Tony,” Kate states.

“Pushing it is what I love about this job. That and the beautiful girls.”

“I appreciate you coming down here on such short notice, Mrs Powers. Please, have a seat,” Kate says when the reporter arrives at NCIS squad room.

“Can the polite act, Agent Todd. What exactly do you want from me?” Carol, the reporter, snaps at Kate.

“Do not talk to my sister like that. All she needs is information,” I snap out the report while getting into her personal space.

“About what?”

“Your relationship with Gunnery Sergeant Atlas,” Kate informs her while pulling me way from the reporter before I hit her.

“Who?”

“Look familiar?” I question her while showing her the photo of the missing marine.

“Ah yeah. Maybe. I’m a reporter. I’ve interviewed dozens of marines.”

“The thing is, this marine disappeared five days ago. My job is to get him back,” Kate enlightens the reporter.

“What’s that got to so with me?”

“Does your husband know you’re having an affair?” I ask Carol while looking at her ring.

“Excuse me?”

“I’ll take that as a no.”

“I think we’re done here.”

“Should we try your husband at home or work this time of day, Mrs Powers?”

“I don’t know what happened to Atlas, okay? But my husband had nothing to do with this,” Carol snaps at Gibbs in integration while I watch it with Kate and Tony from within observation.

“So he knew you were having an affair?” Gibbs integrates her.

“No! Derek was in assignment in Italy, and he just got back last night. You can check with the post, they’ll vouch for him.”

“Oh, I will. How did you meet Atlas?”

“Uh… at a bar three weeks ago. He said he had a story that I might be interested in.”

“Do you sleep with anyone who offers you a story, or is that one of the fringe benefits?”

“This is a nightmare.”

“What story did Atlas tell you?”

“He thought someone might have killed his friends and that he could be next.”

“Did he say why?”

“He wouldn’t tell me. I thought it might be connected with his work in Iraq. Some kind of cover up.”

“It says here you write articles on home improvement,” Gibbs reads of the report Kate and I wrote up about the reporter.

“Gardens mostly. I just… I thought if I could get a story like this, I could…”

“Oh, yeah. I understand. Most reporters… they’re absolutely kill for a scoop like this.”

“He tried to warn me. He told me that if he talked, something like this might happen.”

“Something like what?”

“Someone in his unit would kill him.”

“I think she’s telling the truth,” Kate informs us without taking her eyes of the integration Gibbs is running in the next room.
“The question is was Gunnery Sergeant Atlas? Some guys will say anything to get a woman into bed,” Tony States.

“He’s a marines, you are not Tony,” I state without looking at Tony.

“Well, she’s a reporter. I doubt she’d fall for something like that,” Kate overlaps me.

“You’re kidding, right?” Tony questions Kate while giving me a look.

“What do you mean?”

“All men lie to some degree, Kate. It’s expected of them.”

“All right, well don’t confuse your world with reality, Tony.”

“It’s like when a women asks a man to guess her age. Have you ever done that? Do you honestly still believe you still look twenty five?”

“Not anymore.”

“I’ve never done anything like this before. I only wanted a story,” Carol informs Gibbs while walking down into the squad room.

“You got one,” Gibbs states without caring.

“Is there any way, anything that I can do to keep my husband out of this?”

“Not have an affair,” I offer to her.


“You know, I could publish what Atlas told me. It wouldn’t look so good for the marine corps,” Carol informs us.

“I don’t read the post. Watch your step,” Gibbs states when we get to the elevator.

“Regardless of what you may think of me, Agent Gibbs, I truly hope that you find Bill and that he’s still alive,” Carol says while giving Gibbs a smile.

“Me, too,” Gibbs says as the door closes.

“You were pretty tough on her in there,” Kate states when Gibbs returns to his desk.

“Yes, she reminds me of my ex-wife.”

“Which one?” Tony questions Gibbs.

“All of them. Did her husband’s story check out?”

“He was in Italy, arrived at Reagan National last night at twenty one sixteen. Looks like a dead end.”

“Do you believe that story about a cover-up in Iraq, Gibbs?” Kate questions Gibbs.

“I don’t know. I’m more concerned about what’s happening here,” Gibbs answers her.

“Meaning?”

“Meaning Atlas was twenty three six.”

“Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician. Guys can make or disarm anything from a grenade to a… backpack nuke,” Tony informs us what the numbers Gibbs sprouted means.

“If someone’s kidnapping E-O-D personnel, I want to know why,” I say softly.

“Terrorists?” Kate offers to us.

“Is anyone missing from Atlas’ unit?” Gibbs inquires of Kate.

“They’re all accounted for. But I might have something else here. A mew C.O. checked into his command last month, Major Joe Sacco. His record’s clean except for a non-punitive letter of punishment from when he was a first Lieutenant.”

“For what?” I asks Kate in confusion.

“He got into a fight with a couple of enlisted men in ninety two. Atlas was one of them.”

“Yeah, Gibbs. We’re on our way,” Gibbs says into his phone when it rings. He turns to Kate and says, “Abby’s was one of them.”

“Do you think Atlas is still alive?”

“No ransom note? Been missing over five days? I’d say the odds were against him,” Tony answers her while walking over to the elevator with us.

“Are you done with the statistics?” I question Tony as I step into the elevator with Gibbs.

“Hi, guys!” Abby says once we get into the lab.

“Hey Abby,” we all say in unison.
“I think I found out how they found your missing Marine.”
“From one cigarette butt?” Kate asks her in confusion.
“Well, I was kind of bored, so I thought it’s be fun every single test I could think of. I was almost to a rape kit when… I mentioned I was a little earlier, right?”
“Yeah, we notices, Abby,” I state.
“What the hell is that?” Tony questions Abby while pointing to a model of a war.
“I’m building a model of Gallipoli. See, these guys over there,” Abby rambles on.
“Why?” Gibbs asks her.
“Stop.”
“Is this one a Turk or an Anzac?” Tony question her while picking up a soldier.
“Um, actually he’s uh,” Abby says while taking the soldier off Tony and putting it back down.
“What did you find?” Gibbs cuts Abby off.
“Altas’ DNA was on the cigarette. So most likely it’s his.”
“That’s it?” Tony asks her in confusion.
“I wasn’t finished yet, Tony. I also found high concentrations of ephedrine, dihydrocodeine and caffeine. Sound familiar?”
“Bron,” Tony and Gibbs exclaims together.
“And from the way it was concentrated, it looks like he ingested enough to knock out a racehorse.”
“Bron?” Kate questions them.
“What?” I overlap her.
“It’s a mixture of speed and codeine. It’s illegal here by available over the counter in the Philippines and Okinawa. Japan,” Tony explains what ‘Bron’ is.
“Okinawa? That was Major Sacco’s last duty station,” Kate explains to everyone.
“Check out the ride, we’re going to Quantico,” Gibbs orders while giving Tony the keys.
“Oh, boss. Rush hour. Real bad idea to get on the road about now. I’ll be outside,” Tony complains to Gibbs.
“Good job, Abby,” Kate says to Abby.
“Thanks, Kate.”
“Hey Abby, still bored?” Gibbs questions Abby.
“Well yeah, maybe a little.”
“I think I have a more constructive way for you to spend your time. I need some help.”
“Okay.”
“By the way, Gallipoli was an amphibious operation.”
“Oh… hmm. Well, it’s on Styrofoam so it’ll float.”
“Rush hour. It’s kind of a misnomer if you ask me,” Tony says when we get stuck in the rush hour traffic on the freeway.
“I didn’t,” Gibbs states.
“I mean, it’s not like anybody’s really rushing anywhere, and it always takes more than an hour. They should call it like…”
“Shut up and sit there before I shoot you hour.”
“I was thinking of something a little shorter,” Tony says before slurping his drink which makes Gibbs snatch it off him and throw it out the window. “That’s littering.”
“Fine me.”
“No, I’m still here. Thanks, Corporal,” Katye says into her phone from her spot beside me in the back seat of the car. She turns to Gibbs and says, “Major Sacco is in the field right now.”
“Doing what?” I ask her.
“According to his office, disarming a bomb.”
“Major Sacco! Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. We need to talk,” Gibbs say while we walking over to the major where a bomb just exploded.
“It wouldn’t surprise me if Altas showed up tomorrow still hung over,” Sacco says when we get back to the range.

“He pulled a disappearing act before?” Tony asks him.

“Never this long, but he’s had some alcohol related problems in the past.”

“You’ve got a missing Marine, major. You don’t seem too concerned about it,” Gibbs states.

“My only concern right now is getting my men ready to deploy to Iraq.”

“What about the gunny? Is he deployable?” I ask the major.

“Unfortunately. I’ve served with Atlas before. In my opinion, we’re better off without him.”

“Yeah? Why’s that?” Gibbs questions the major.

“He’s a marginal Marine,”

“Seems like the two of you had some person problems, major,” Kate states.

“You could say that, agent Todd.”

“Tell me about them,” Gibbs orders the major.

“If you’re interested, you can read about it in my record book.”

“I have. You two got in a fist fight in ninety two. About what?”

“Nothing. A couple of my men got drunk one night. Atlas took a swing at me. I overreacted.”

“Sir, demo’s waiting. They’re waiting on your command,” Davis runs over to us and informs the major.

“Roger that, corporal,” Sacco says to Davis before turning back to Gibbs and saying, “We only have this range for another hour. When you find Atlas, let him know that I have a charge sheet waiting for him.”

“He’s hiding something,” Kate states when Sacco walks away.

“Oh, yeah,” Gibbs says as we start to walk over to the car.

“The question is what?” Tony states.

“And why?” I add onto the end.

“You three might want to cover your,” Gibbs starts to say but the explosion interrupts him making Tony, Kate and I duck down to the ground while covering our ears. Gibbs just looks at us and finishes, “Ears.”

“Boss, is there a reason why you only take these back roads?” Tony questions Gibbs while driving down a dirt road at high speed.

“Or do you just hate us?” Kate adds on.

“You can’t hate Kate, that’s my job,” I state making Gibbs have to hide a smile while Kate hits me in the arm.

“I hate traffic more,” Gibbs states.

“I think I’m going to puke,” Tony states while going green.

“No you’re not. If you puke, I will push up out of the car without Gibbs slowing down,” I inform Tony.

“Roll down the window!” Gibbs overlaps me while ordering Tony.

“Oh,” Tony says while Gibbs phone rings.

“Here, answer this!” Gibbs orders Kate while throwing his phone over his shoulder at Kate.

“It’s Kate!” Kate says into the phone after Abby talks for a moment, “He’s driving! We should be back soon. If that’s what you want to call it! What’s up?! You’re going to have to speak up! Gibbs is apparently trying to kill us!”

“What’s she saying?” Gibbs questions Kate.

“Why didn’t we hear about it?” Kate questions Abby without answering Gibbs. “They’re considered deserters.”

“Corporal Tom O’Conner, reported U-A on August second, ninety six. Sergeant Rick Hall… reported U-A March eleventh, ninety eight. Staff sergeant John Mohs, reported U-A on December tenth, two thousand. And now Gunnery Sergeant Atlas, five days ago. All four served in the
Philippines in ninety two with Joe Sacco, and all four subsequently disappeared without a trace,”
Kate reports what she found once we got back to the squad room.
“So why is it no one picked up on this before us?” Tony questions her.
“Well, we wouldn’t have picked up on it if Abby wasn’t bored. These men were considered
deserters. Nobody ever connected them until we did today.
“So let’s pick up Sacco, find out what’s going on.”
“Not yet,” Gibbs states.
“Well, I think he’s right, Gibbs. I mean, we could be dealing with a potential serial killer here,” Kate
agrees with Tony.
“What if it’s not Sacco?” I ask them.
“Well, if it’s not him, then he’s probably the next one on the missing list.”
“I want everything here is on that E-O-D team from ninety two. Kate, get with Abby and start where
she left off. Tony, you concentrate on Sacco. I want everything from his birth until right now;” Gibbs
orders while getting up to get more coffee for himself.
“You remember the good old days, Kate?” Tony asks her.
“What good old days?” Kate asks in confusion.
“When Gibbs would confide in us and treat us like peers?”
“No.”
“Good, I thought I was the only one.”
“DiNozzo!” Gibbs shout when he walks into the squad room the next morning to see Tony sleeping
at his desk the following morning after working all night.
“You’ll have to speak louder, boss. I haven’t been able to hear anything since that explosion
yesterday,” Tony inform Gibbs while sitting up straight.
“Find Kate. I want a full briefing in twenty minutes.”
“You got it. Kate?” Tony says before shouting, “Kate!”
“What?” Kate asks with a gasp as she sits up behind her desk.
“Time to wake up.”
“Mm. I feel like hell.”
“You look three steps beyond hell. What is that called?” I ask while snapping my fingers like I am
trying to find the word.
“Kate, what have we got?” Gibbs question Kate when he returns to the squad room after twenty
minutes while eating cold pizza that was sitting on Tony’s desk.
“Oh, how can you eat that stuff? It’s seven thirty in the morning,” Kate states.
“Practice. It’s good. You want some?” Gibbs asks with a muffled voice because of his mouth full of
food.
I’ll pass. We’re still trying to track down former Corporal Cohen. He left a trail ‘till two thousand
two, then nothing.”
“Tony?”
“Sacco was stationed in the same vicinity with all four Marines who went U-A. That’s got to be
more than a coincidence,” Tony answers Gibbs with a muffled voice from the cold food too.
“What have you learned about the fight in his record book?”
“Well, I called the colonel he was working for in ninety two. He didn’t remember much. It could
have been because it was two a.m. when I called him, but you never know.”
“What’d he say?” Gibbs asks Tony around more pizza.
“He thinks it was over a woman.”
“An all-nighter and this is all I get?”
“We’re recreating a twelve years history, Gibbs. What did you expect?” Kate inquires of Gibbs.
“More.”
“Okay, then bring Major Sacco in for questioning.”
“Why are you hooked on Major Sacco being the bad guy?” I question Kate.
“Give me something I can nail him with and I will,” Gibbs informs her with a muffled tone of voice. “I’ll get it for you,” Tony declares.


“Let me shadow him for a couple of days. If he’s got a screw loose, I’ll know it. He might lead us to Atlas.”

“All right.”

“Listen, boss, I’m telling you… it beats sitting around here doing nothing. I’m out there trying to find him.”

“He said okay, Tony,” Kate and I overlap Tony.

Oh. I’m telling you, that explosion really messed my hearing up.”

“I’ll go with him,” Kate say.

“No. no. I need you here. DiNozzo, you call in every hour. If you forget one time… call in late… don’t bother coming back.”

“Look, just don’t take any chances, okay? I mean, if we’re right about Sacco, he’s got more than a screw look.”

“Here I was thinking you didn’t care,” Tony states.

“It has nothing to do with caring. If anything happened to you, I’m going to be stuck working here with Gibbs alone.”

“Oh, he’s not that bad. A little grumpy sometimes…”

“Hey, DiNozzo! Are you still here?!” Gibbs shouts over to us.

“Then again, you may be on to something.”

“I don’t get this, why would everyone disappear off of one unit?” I say to Gibbs when Kate and I return to the squad room where Gibbs is siting.

“So I found Cohen. I think we can cross him off the suspect list. He’s dead,” Abby informs us when we all head down to the lab.

“How?” Kate questions her.

“Hey, where’s Tony?”

“I’ve got him trailing Sacco,” Gibbs informs her.

“Alone?”

“If he stayed much longer, Gibbs was going to shot him,” I inform Abby making her smile.

“He does his best work when there’s not an audience around,” Gibbs corrects me on the reason without really saying I am wrong because we I said is true too.

“I’ve got a weird feel,” Abby says.

“Abs, you always have a weird feeling.”

“When don’t you have a weird feeling? I overlap Gibbs making Kate and Abby look between the two of us.

“I know, but this one’s different,” Abby defends her weird feeling.

“He can take care of himself. You let me know when those records show up,” Gibbs states before leading me back to the elevator while Kate and Abby talks to each other.

“This is everything the Alexandria P.D. found on Corporal Cohen,” Kate says while holding up a photo of a cross necklace after she goes through the file on the missing marines.

“He’s Baptist,” Kate states.

“According to Cohen’s records he was Jewish,” I read out of the missing marines file.

“What about Sacco?”

“According to Cohen’s records he was Jewish,” I read out of the missing marines file.

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“According to Cohen’s records he was Jewish,” I read out of the missing marines file.

“What about Sacco?”

“I’ve interviewed everyone in the area. No one saw Tony after he came out of the bar. You don’t think he’s… I don’t either,” Kate says when Gibbs walks over to us in the parking lot that Tony was in when he called him.

“Sacco,” Gibbs snaps.

“We’ve got people at his house, an A-P-B out on his vehicle. It’s only a matter of time before we pick him up,” I update Gibbs.

“Yeah, well… time’s the one thing we don’t have,” Gibbs says before talking into his phone, “Gibbs, for the Director.”

“We’re dealing with a serial killer who is methodical and patient. He spread his kills out over an eight year period. And if we got by Cohen’s case, he’s into making them suffer. But why did he go after Tony?” Kate questions us in the squad room the next day after Tony disappeared.

“He saw something tonight, something Major Sacco doesn’t want us to know about,” Gibbs states.

“Then why didn’t Tony tell us?”

“Because maybe he didn’t think it was important at the time? Or he didn’t have time before he was taken,” I offer to her.

“Have we heard anything from Agent DiNozzo yet?” McGee questions us as he runs into the squad room.

“McGee, you’re late. Kate, bring him up to speed,” Gibbs snaps out.

“Uh… uh… where can I set up shop?”

“Take Tony’s desk,” Kate states while pointing at the desk.

“You don’t think he’ll mind?”

“I don’t think he can mind, especially when we find him dead,” I state making Kate and McGee give me a disgusted look, “What?”

“That’s cold Alice. You can pretend you think he is coming back,” Kate snaps at me.

“Oh, he is coming back. In a wooden box.”

“Alice, he is coming back alive.”

“What do you got?” Gibbs questions Abby when we get into the lab at night after trying to find Tony all day.

“I pulled a partial fingerprint off the silver cross found on Corporal Cohen’s” Abby bounces around while telling us.

“I know. But I did find a match,” Abby says without caring about Gibbs tony of voice.

“Gibbs. Secure the area. We’re on our way,” Gibbs answers his phone before hanging up and turns to Kate and I and saying, “Manassas P.D. located Sacco’s car. McGee, get me an arrest warrant on Carol Powers.”

“You got it, boss. Uh… I mean… Agent Gibbs.”

“Let’s roll.”

“Hey, bring him back, all right?” Abby orders us.
“Special Agent Gibbs. NCIS,” Gibbs says when he brings the car to a stop outside a sewer entrance and get out of the car.
“We think they’re down in the sewer system. I’ve got two k-nine units on the way,” An officer reports to us.
“Oh does this other car belong to?” I ask them.
“Plates came back stole. It looks like it was abandoned here.”
“We’re going in,” Gibbs informs him while handing me a gun and readying his own.
“Where the hell are you?” we hear Sacco calling out to the gunny.
“Thank god Tony’s still alive! Who else do you know who pisses off like that?” Kate whispers to you.
“Um... You,” I whisper back.
“Gunny!” Sacco calls out again.
“Tony?” Gibbs whispers thought the vents.
“Gibbs!” Tony whispers back.
“DiNozzo!”
“Hey, what are you doing down here?”
“What do you think I’m doing here?”
“Is that Kate?”
“Yeah,” Kate answers while watching Gibbs back while I watch down the sewer the other way.
“How’d you get over there?” Gibbs questions Tony softly.
“I’m kind of winging it. Atlas is in pretty bad shape,” Tony updates Gibbs.
“Stay where you are. We’ll work our way to you.”
“I can’t. Sacco is right behind us.”
“Okay, go. Go! Keep moving. We’ll catch up to you.”
“It’s the waitress from the bar,” Kate whispers when we get to where Tony and Atlas is.
“We take it slow. If you think she’s going to shoot, you take her out,” Gibbs whispers back to her.
“You don’t want to do this,” Tony says to Vanessa.
“I’ve been doing this for eight years. I was the youngest. They gave me all their food. And slowly each one of them died. Do you know what it’s like to watch your friends die? To sleep with their corpses? Do you?” Vanessa snaps at Tony.
“We can’t let you do this, Vanessa.”
“We?”
“Drop it!” Kate yells and when Vanessa turns around and points her gun at us. Gibbs, Kate and I all fire our guns at her and she is dead long before she hits the ground.
“Yeah, my friends,” Tony cheers to the best of his ability.
“I knew it. I knew behind the whole marine thing, you really are at heart,” Tony rambles as Gibbs and him walk into the squad room in NCIS.
“Forget about it, McGee. He’s still alive,” Gibbs says when he see McGee sitting at Tony’s desk in hope.
“Hey, Gibbs. Is the walking corps annoying you still?” I ask Gibbs while handing him the report to sign off on.
“Yes,” Gibbs says while pulling me out of his chair and taking the seat himself. I sit on the side of his desk while continuing to talk to him.
“I’ll call Ducky.”
“Thanks.”
“My pleasure.”
“What’s your plan for your birthday?”
“That is for me to know and for you to find out.”
“Odd coincidence how nature and circumstance have conspired to place you in this position, my friend. Though I imagine the irony isn’t of much interest to you now,” Ducky mumbles to the victim’s poor body.

“What do you see, Duck?” Gibbs ask Ducky while looking over the poor victim.

“Well, some blood and tissue residue on the stump, though not nearly enough for this to be the impaling instrument of his demise.”

“He had that hole in him before he landed there?” Kate asks Ducky.

“Precisely, yes.”

“Plain old ring-toss doesn’t cut it for some people,” Tony jokes.

“What put the hell put that hole in him?” I question Ducky.

“Well, it’s approximately eight inches in diameter, metallic shrapnel residue, organ and tissue damage consistent with a high velocity object. I’ve only seen this one time before – in a Somali village called M’butatu. A young sheepherder made the mistake of impregnating the daughter of a local warlord.”

“And they cored him out like an apple?” Tony questions Ducky in confusion.

“I can assure you, Tony, they take such things very seriously in Somalia.”

“What’d they do it?” Gibbs asks them.

“Good old fashioned Soviet technology. A shoulder-fired anti-tank missile at twenty paces.”

“It’s what they used to shoot our helicopters down in Iraq,” Kate says.

“Red, white, and blue version’s called the SMAW – shoulder-launched multi-purpose assault weapon,” Tony adds on what he knows.

“The safety back-blast on that weapon is a hundred meters. Yeah. Yeah, they fired from right in here someplace. He was there. The warhead damage should be somewhere on this line,” Gibbs utters.

“On it.”

“What are you looking for?” Kate questions Gibbs and Tony as they look through the trees.

“This,” Gibbs answers her while picking up a cap of something.

“What is it?”

“Igniter cap. When the SMAWs fired, this is ejected out the back. Get some scraping off the tree for Abby. Duck, what are you estimating on time of death?”

“That’s tricky, Jethro. Given the massive and rapid loss of blood, the body temp, lividity and rigor aren’t any much use in establishing P-M-I,” Ducky answers him without answering the question presented to him.

“Yeah but?” I ask Ducky.

“What makes you think there’s a ‘but?’”

“With you there always is.”

“Yes, that’s right. Yeah well as they say in the high country markets of Sri Lanka, there’s more than one way to skin a mongoose. Actually, there are three.”

“Ducky,” Gibbs cuts Ducky’s rambling off.

“After death, the red blood cells in the eyes break down, forming potassium. Now this cloudiness is a by-products of that. Yes, I’ll be able to get an accurate determination when I test it in the lab. Best I can do for now – past twenty four hours.”

“I got something. H-E-D-P. Residue should confirm,” Tony calls over to us.

“Take samples and measurements,” Gibbs orders him.

“Yep.”

“Subtitles?” Kate ask them in confusion.


“Wow, you really do keep something besides comic books in your bathroom.”

“Hard to believe, huh?”
“Impressive.”
“Thanks a lot.”
“I was talking about the crater.”

“McGee! Are you nuts?” Tony hisses at McGee when he sees that he is on Gibbs’s computer.
“What?” McGee asks in confusion.
“You’re at Gibbs’ desk touching his computer. That’s like touching… the Art of the Covenant!”
“Gibbs knows I’m doing this.”
“He said you could use his computer?”
“Uh-huh.”
“Really? When mine fried he wouldn’t let me touch his.”
“Because your fingers are always greasy from fried chicken and pizza. How’s it going?” Gibbs asks while walking over to his computer.
“Bringing it online now, boss,” McGee answers Gibbs.
“What?” Tony asks us in confusion.
“Porn. Gibbs needs to get off before he kills you,” I state making Tony pull a face while Gibbs smacks my leg for that comment.
“Yearbook photos from every British university taken between eighty seven and ninety seven,” McGee answers while moving away from me.
“Who said our terrorist was British?” Tony asks in confusion.
“Ducky thought his syntax suggested a higher education in the British Isles,” Gibbs answers Tony.
“Well, maybe he just grew up watching tons of Cary Grant movies. Okay, why the decade between eighty seven and ninety seven?”
“Because I estimated his age to be thirty three and added five years on either side for safety,” Kate informs Tony.
“Ah, you spend college summers working carnies as Madame Natasha?”
“I’ve always been good at guessing ages.”
“Yeah? How old’s an i?”
“Based on chronology or maturity?”
“Yeah, that’s very funny. Come on. How old?”
“Thirty two,” Kate answers after staring at Tony for a moment.
“You saw my file.”
“Nope.”
“Well how old is Gibbs?”
“That’s great work, McGee,” Gibbs says to McGee, interrupting Kate’s ability to guess his answer.
“Anytime, boss,” McGee says when Gibbs pats him on the back.
“Look at that. He gets a pat on the back, I get a smack on the head,” Tony complains.
“Well, he is shorter than you, it while take Gibbs a while to work out how high to hit,” I inform Tony making McGee give me a look.
“Ah, it doesn’t seem fair, does it?” Kate overlaps me.
“No,” Tony pouts about it.
“But it is. Fax from AFIS came in. our victim is Staff Sergeant Thomas Grimm. He was an Armorer attached to the Ordnance Maintenance Centre at Quantico. Responsible for weapons inventory and custody cards.”
“Makes sense, given the way he died,” Gibbs realise.
“And Ducky was right. He was a boxer. Top rated middle weight on the Quantico boxing team.”
“Looks like a serial number,” Gibbs calls out over Abby’s music in the lab while looking at the number’s on her computer.
“It’s part of one,” Abby agrees with him while correcting him.
“Good part?” I questions Abby.
“You can’t go straight for dessert, Alice. You have to eat your peas first.”
“I hate peas,” Gibbs and I inform her.
“The serial number indicates the manufacturer, the lot number and the year that it was built. You only have a partial, so we only have part of the picture.”
“The good part?” I ask her again.
“It’s ice cream time. The weapon that killed Staff Sergeant Grimm definitely came from the Armory at Quantico.”

“...”

“We can rebuild it. We have the technology. Hello? Steve Austin? The six million dollar man? See, that’s the problem with the world today. No respect for history,” Abby rambles on when we return to the lab that night, after Kate and Tony searched the victim’s house.
“Can we just concentrate on the present?” Gibbs question Abby.
“Kate was right. The hard drive was completely reformatted.”
“So we have nothing?” I question Abby in disappointment.
“Actually, no. when you write data onto a hard drive, it’s triggered electronically and magnetically onto a hard drive plate.”
“What would that mean in something Kate would understand?” Tony ask making Kate give him an angry look.
“That even though the drive was reformatted, all the information it contained is still here. It’s just a matter of ‘humpty dumpty’ it.”
“I thought they couldn’t put humpty dumpty back together again.”
“That’s because the king only had horses and men,” Kate informs him.
“I ran the data through the computer and was able to construct a virtual hard drive containing the information from Staff Sergeant Grimm’s computer,” Abby explains to us while grinning at Kate and Tony.
“You got everything back?” I question Abby in confusion and surprise.
“Since the day he bought it.”
“Hey, let’s start with the most recent stuff,” Gibbs informs her.
“Okay, the last file Grimm edited was a JPEG,” Abby inform us while pulling up the JPEG which is a photo of lots of weapons.
“Whoa. A lot of firepower. It isn’t exactly standard Armory floor covering,” Gibbs exclaims after looking at the photo for a heartbeat.
“It’s not. That’s Grimm’s living room,” Tony replies to Gibbs, while staring at the photo.

“I ran the LUDS on staff Sergeant Grimm’s phone. The day before he was killed, he placed seven calls to Abe’s Pawn Ship. None of them lasting more than a minute,” Kate informs us the next morning in the squad room.
“Setting up the meet?” Tony questions us.
“Could be,” Gibbs agrees with him.
“Pawn shop’s local. LEOs said that the previous owner, an Abe Hargrove, is currently doing three to five at the F-C-I in Butner for interstate trafficking. Daughter’s running it now,” Kate reports to Gibbs.
“Well, maybe the daughter is following in daddy’s footsteps,” I state while taking a sip of my coffee.
“Undercover time?” Tony asks hopefully.
“For me,” Gibbs states making Tony visibly deflate on that idea.
“Not a good idea, boss.”
“Yeah? Ehy is that, DiNozzo?”
“You’re thinking renegade enlisted bearing gifts bearing gifts straight from the source.”
“Yeah, I was.”
“We don’t know the daughter’s involvement with Grimm yet. Approaching her this soon as another Marine gone bad might make her suspicious. Which brings me, actually, to another option.”
“Uh-huh.”
“Complete and total sleaze. Pire pawnshop material. And let’s face it, I’m a more believable scumbag
than you.”
“No argument here,” Kate agrees with Tony.
“Well, he was raised in a generation where the child is expected to be polite, not a little bitch who
only care about anything but getting his dick wet,” I agree with Kate.
“Yeah, I get the point. Have Abby do a full background and an I.D,” Gibbs finally agrees for Tony
to go undercover.
“Sure?”
“What!”
“For you?”
“For you, DiNozzo. For you.”
“Yeah!”
“Kate, what’d you get from Staff Sergeant Grimm’s C.O. at Quantico?”
“Well, part of Staff Sergeant Grimm’s job was to evaluate weapons. If they were beyond repair then
he would transport them to a facility to be destroyed. But once they were out of Quantico, they were
out of the system,” Kate reports to Gibbs.
“Out of the Quantico system. They still have to be signed into wherever they were going.”
“Well, these are Staff Sergeant Grimm’s S.R.B and duty records. I’ll go through everything.”
“Yeah, you will.”
“You know, Gibbs, I know that you’re bothered that the terrorist that got away. I am too. But… but
you might want to thank about, you know, trying to be a little bit less of a Gloomy Gus.”
“Gloomy Gus?”
“She means you might want to stop acting like. Well, Kate,” I inform Gibbs making Kate glare at me
while Gibbs hides a smile behind his coffee.
“I like a girl with sunk,” Tony when he returns from the undercover mission, meeting the pawn
shops daughter, who turned out to be an undercover agent for A-T-F.
“Is that right?” Stone, the A-T-F agent, flirts with Tony.
“First girl I ever kissed… kicked me right in the…”
“Way above the shins?”
“Painfully above.”
“Hmm. I hope you learned your lesson.”
“I did. Next time… I waited ‘till after she swallowed her Gummy bear,” Tony informs her making
Stone laugh.
We found evidence on Grimm’s computer he was putting photos of his goods on the internet, see
what interest he could draw,” Gibbs snaps at them while breaking up Tony and Stone’s moment.
“When you put it that way, Gibbs, it sounds like something you would have to get McGee to remove
from Tony’s computer,” I inform Gibbs making Tony and Stone give me a look for saying what
everyone was thinking.
“You think my buyer found him first?” Stone questions Gibbs while giving me a disgusted look.
“I think it’s a possibility,” Gibbs answers while using his body to shield me between Stone and me.
“Cut out the middle man, save some dough. Only the dal went south somehow,” Tony realised.
“Yeah, well someone has still got enough firepower out to do some serious damage. DiNozzo, find
us some weapons to sell.”
On it.”
“Agent Stone, with me,” Gibbs states while leading me away from the squad room but Stone doesn’t
follow us for a moment. “Call your buyer. Tell him you found a new supplier.”
“If my boss verifies that we’re working together.
“This time you’ll bring your supplier. He’ll think you’re covering your ass.”
“The buyer won’t like it.”
“No, he won’t. But you’re gonna give him a background that checks out.”
“Will Agent DiNozzo be the supplier again?”

“Why, the last few undercover mission’s Tony went on he has been discovered and you think Gibbs will let him sell weapons?” I ask Stone in confusion, making her glare at me again.

“Well, unfortunately, it looks like DiNozzo doesn’t fit the profile. He’s core scumbag type,” Gibbs agrees with me.

“Gibbs,” Kate grasp while running up to us.

“Special Agent Todd. Special Agent Stone. A-T-F. She’ll be working with us on this.”

“Possibly,” Stone attempts t correct Gibbs.

“Give me a minute,” Gibbs say to Stone making her walk away.

“Two things. McGee checked out Corporal Patty McClain’s alibi. Her boyfriend shipped to Iraq just like she said. When Grimm was killed, they were shacked up in a motel,” Kate updates Gibbs on what she found.

“Second thing?” I ask her.

“Staff Sergeant’s Raphael’s holding out. I can feel it in my gut.”

“Guts are good,” Gibbs states.

“Are you sure your guts not just hungry? Or horny? Or on your period?” I question her.

“He’s having a little time-out in the interrogation room, so when you’re ready I’ll go over my notes with you,” Kate summaries for Gibbs.

“Got to work up an I.D. with Abby. I’m afraid Staff Sergeant Raphael is all yours,” Gibbs commands her.

“You always do the interrogations, Gibbs.”

“Not this one.”

“Abs, I need an I.D.” Gibbs greets Abby when walking into the lab where Abby is playing loud music like normal. I turn the music down.

“Abs, I need an I.D.” Gibbs greets Abby when walking into the lab where Abby is playing loud music like normal. I turn the music down.

“There’s a lot of that going around. Is that the A-T-f lady who’s working with us?” Abby asks Gibbs while leading us into the back office in the lab.

“News travels fast around here,” Stone asks Abby.

“You have no idea,” Gibbs mutters.

“Tony, Kate or Ducky?” I ask Abby.

“Jimmy,” Abby answers me.

“Who the hell is Jimmy?”

“Ducky’s new assistant.”

“No, that’s Gerald’s job.”

“Well, the direct hired someone else.”

“That’s bullshit. Gerald will be back.”

“Girls,” Gibbs says breaking up us, “We don’t have time for this.”

“Shoot,” Abby turns to Gibbs while sitting behind her computer.

“Arms dealer. Ex-military.”

“D.D!”

“Honourable discharge. Give me a medal.”

“Silver?”

“Bronze.”

“Silver would be better. You’re more of a winter. You never had your colours done, did you?”

“Not unless I was unconscious.”

“So there is a possibility that you did. How many times have you been unconscious?” I ask Gibbs.

“Your colour are arranged seasonally based on your skin tone. You’re a winter. Bronze is more of an autumn. It’s important, Gibbs,” Abby informs Gibbs.

“I’m sure it is,” Gibbs scoffs at her.

“You scoff but there’s scientific…”

“Silver’s will be fine, Abs,” Gibbs overlaps Abby.

“Wise choice. Okay, your work history.”
Civilian contractor. Nicaragua, Nepal, Greece.”
“Kazakhstan – that would be a good addition.”
“Another winter thing?” Stone snidely questions Abby.
“Don’t be silly, A-T-F lady.”
“Abs, leave a few gaps. Don’t make it so neat,” Gibbs orders Abby softly.
“Please, Gibbs. I’ve been making fake I.D.s since I was fifteen. What kind of name do you want?”
“Anything but Gus.”
“How about Tony or Anthony?” I question Gibbs making him smack my leg.
“Make your call,” Gibbs orders Stone once Abby finishes his report.
“Another winter thing?” Stone snidely questions Abby.
“The buyer shows a group of abandoned factory buildings somewhere in the middle of nowhere,” Stone informs us when she returns to the squad room.
“Smart. They’d spot backup anywhere close,” Tony states.
“Yeah.”
“Our cell phones have G-P-S technology. They’ll take them, sweep us for a signal, make sure we’re not wired,” Gibbs says from his spot behind his chair.
“So what’s that?” Stone question Gibbs while pointing to his watch.
“It’s a locator. I won’t activate it unless they move us.”
“Very James Bond. Does it tell time, too?” Tony questions him.
“You can lay back and track us from a safe distance.”
“Be careful Gibbs,” I say softly into Gibbs ear.
“Yeah?” Stone asks into the phone from her spot in the warehouse.
“Team’s in place,” Tony informs her.
“Good.”
“Tell Gibbs not to forget it’s the first two M-P Fives on the left that have live clips.”
“Tell him yourself.”
“I already told him four times. I think he’s annoyed. It’s his left when he’s looking down at the crate with the barrels pointing away from him.”
“Away from him. He knows.”
“Well, yeah. Okay, just remind him that it’s the top layer of the ammo cache that’s live. Because the rest is…”
“Hey, DiNozzo! Get off the line,” Gibbs orders him.
“Oh, okay. Good luck, boss.”
“Yeah. Great,” Cooke says into the phone before talking to Gibbs, “Time for NCIS to stop down on the job.”
“I learned everything I know from A-T-F,” Gibbs informs her while standing up.
“Special Agent Todd just informed me Corporal Patty McClain and the weapons are in custody.”
“Okay, cuff her,” An A-T-F agent orders Tony.
“Agent Stone,” Tony says while cuffing her.
“Agent DiNozzo. I didn’t see this coming,” Stone states.
“That was kind of the plan,” Gibbs and I inform her together.
“We’ve been watching you since your last op. too many things didn’t add up,” Cooke, an undercover A-T-F agent, informs her.
“You killed Staff Sergeant Grimm, didn’t you?” Tony questions Stone.
“No. Corporal McClain did. They got in an argument over his cut and she blew him away,” Stone informs us in her defence.
“What do you want to bet she’s going to say that same thing, Gibbs?” I ask Gibbs making him smile.
“It doesn’t really matter. I’m screwed either way.”
“I really liked her,” Tony says the next morning in the squad room.
“A-T-f Agent involved in illegal weapons and murder, what’s not to like?” Kate reads out.
“So quick to judge, Kate. Sure she has flaws. Sure she’s going to prison. But my instincts told me she had good qualities as well.”
“Two of them are under her shirt,” I state from my spot in Gibbs chair.
“You’re not going to believe this, but when it comes to women, I actually look for more… complex things under the surface.”
“Really?” Kate question Tony in disbelief.
“Really.”
“Like when you were tonguing that he/she a week ago. Lots of complex things under that surface.”
“Well, at last he didn’t let a terrorist get away when he had a chance to kill him,” I cut in again.
“I gotta go,” Tony says to Kate before almost running away.
“What’s wrong with DiNozzo?” Gibbs questions us.
“He’s conflicted,” Kate lies.
“Kate is being a bitch. She keeps picking on him for kissing a he/she marine, even knowing she has her own flaws. Like letting a terrorist get away,” I inform Gibbs making him give Kate his thousand mile stare.
A Weak Link

“Good morning,” Kate greets Tony in the morning.
“How was your weekend?” Tony asks us.
“Oh, let’s see. I paid bills, did laundry, went shopping, vacuumed. I bet you don’t even own a vacuum.”
“I lease. Alice?”
“I tried to send Kate insane, finished all my school work. Wet the bed,” I answer her.
“You wet your bed.”
“I never said it was my bed. And it was cold coffee.”
“I hate you,” Kate informs me while Tony almost falls on the floor laughing at that.
“Okay, so what did you do this weekend that left that smile on your face?” I question Tony.
“I watched a great movie,” Tony answers me.
“Let me guess, a horror flick?” Kate questions him.
“Halloween eight. I think it’s the best Halloween ever. It makes Halloween seven look like Halloween five.”
“I can’t even believe they made one of them, much less eight. It’s gotta be a ‘men are from mars’ thing.”
“Arianna like it.”
“Arianna? I thought you two broke up,” I state in confusion.
“What makes you think that?”
“Oh, I don’t know. Maybe because you came in the other day and said, ‘I broke up with Arianna,’” Kate says to him.
“Oh, you don’t know much about dating, do you?”
“No she doesn’t,” I inform him.
“Oh, why don’t you enlighten me,” Kate overlaps me.
“Well, there’s always one phony breakup that precedes the real breakup. Everyone knows that,” Tony informs us while Gibbs walks in to the squad room right as his phone begins to ring.
“Yeah, got it. Thanks,” Gibbs says into his phone, once he hangs up the phone he says, “Grab your gear. Kate, get ducky. Tony, gas the truck.”
“Where are we going?” Kate questions Tony once Gibbs leave the squad room.
“With Gibbs, you never know,” Tony answer her while they get their gear.
“I.D. NCIS Special Agent Gibbs,” An MP says into his radio.
“Clear,” the person on the other end informs him.
“Okay, the MP says into the radio before turning to Gibbs and saying, “Thank you, sir.”
“Agent Gibbs? Commander Rainer. SEAL Team eight,” Rainer informs Gibbs when we get to the crime scene.
“What happened here?” I question Rainer.
“We were on a training exercise. Lieutenant Johnson, the team leader, was rappelling down the cliff when his D-link snapped.”
“Did you secure the top of the cliff?” Gibbs asks him.
“I did.”
“Is that the rest of the Lieutenant Johnson’s squad?”
“Yes, sir.”
“I’d appreciate it if you tell them not to talk to anyone until I talk to them.”
“Already taken care of, sir.”
“Oh, what an awful way to die,” Kate says while looking at the cliff the victim plummet off of.
“I can think of worse ways to go,” Tony states while photographing the scene.
“Like what?”
“Well, getting eaten by a shark. Being buried alive. Falling into a wood chipper.”
“Getting killed by a terrorist that Kate is too big of a coward to killed,” I add onto the end.
“You’ve given this some thought,” Kate says to the two of us.
“Well yeah. So?” Tony asks her while I just shrug my shoulder.
“Nothing.”
“Someone moved the body,” Ducky states.
“After he fell, his squad members came to his assistance to see if anything could be done. Unfortunately he died on impact,” Rainer defends the men with a rehearsed excuse.
“Well, that would account for a few inches. But someone moved him farther than that.”
“We pulled him away from the face of the cliff because there was falling shale. It’s an old mine. We were careful not to disturb anything.”
“Was emptying his pockets part of the first aid effort?” I ask him.
“The Intel was classified. We removed it so the body could be transported. That’s OS-O-P under these circumstances.”
“DiNozzo,” Gibbs calls over to Tony.
“Yeah, boss?” Tony answer him.
“Top of the cliff. Shoot and sketch.”
“Gee, boss. It’s a long way up.”
“Gibbs, why do you think both brainless and boobless always argue with orders?” I ask Gibbs.
“Though I am not sure which is which.”
“DiNozzo, was there something in my tone of voice that made that sound like a suggestion?” Gibbs ask Tony.
“On it!” Tony says before speed walking away from Gibbs hits him.
“Agent Gibbs, I realize that you have an investigation to perform. From what we can see that’s pretty obvious that D-link had a catastrophic failure,” Rainer points out what he believes happened.
“You’re right, commander. We have an investigation to perform,” I snap at the commander.
“What do you got there?” Gibbs questions Ducky.
“Unfortunately for Lieutenant Johnson, it appears to be just what it looks like,” Ducky informs us.
“Well, that eliminates the guess work.”
“Is this a common occurrence, one of these breaking?” Kate questions us.
“I’ve never seen it happen before. It doesn’t mean it couldn’t,” Gibbs answers her right as Tony makes some of the rocks fall of the cliff.
“I think I can move him,” Ducky informs us.
“Gibbs, I got something. Is that a piece of the D-link?” Kate questions us.
“Sure looks like it,” Gibbs agrees with her.
“Don’t worry, my friend. We’ll get you cleaned up and presentable in a way that honours your service,” Ducky inform the victim’s body.
“Special Agent Gibbs. Special agent Todd. Alice. I understand you were on a training exercise,” Gibbs questions the other marines while I take the notes for him.
“Yes, sir,” they all answer in unison.
“What was your mission?”
“You’ll have to talk to the commander about that, sir,” Porcaro, one of the marines, answer him.
“Other than Lieutenant Johnson’s accident, anything out of the ordinary happen?” I inquire next.
“No, ma’am. It was textbook. We were inserted by helicopter, secured our lines, rappelled down the face of the cliff.”
“What was the order?” Gibbs questions them.
“Vengal and Kenney went first, then myself and Binkowski…”
“We can’t believe this happened to the Lieutenant,” Vengal cuts Porcaro off.
“After the four of you began repelling down, was anyone on top of the cliff other than Lieutenant Johnson?” Kate questions them.
“No, ma’am,” all the marines answer again.
“Each of you will need to provide a statement detailing what you saw,” Gibbs orders them.
“Yes, sir.”
“I’d like Lieutenant Johnson’s service record and the personal effects from his locker.”
“I’ll have it in your office as soon as possible,” Rainer informs Gibbs.

“Then we can put this to bed?” I ask Abby in disbelief.
“Not yet. I emailed the manufacturer for the specs on this particular D-link. When I get them back, I can do a comparative analysis and if nothing hinky, then we can put this to bed.”

“Then we went to Buzzed. It’s a coffee house in Old Town. Sunday night’s like a poetry night,” Abby explains to Kate while ignoring me.

“Do you want Gibbs? He can shoot McGee for making you sad.”

“Why? What happened?” Kate questions her.

“I don’t know. I mean, what’s next? Should I be watching ‘sleepless in Seattle’ on rainy Sunday afternoon? Ah!”

“The official cause of death was multiple traumatic injury. He was in horrible shape, Jethro… lower
leg fracture, hip fracture, severe skull fracture. I could go on and on," Ducky informs us when we arrive in autopsy.

“No. no need, duck,” Gibbs states.

“Have you sent the blood up to Abby for a full tox screen? Tony questions Ducky and after a heartbeat he adds, “Well, that’s what you were going to ask, right?”

“The lifetime odds of dying from a fall like this are roughly the equivalent of the odds of dying from a collision with an asteroid,” Ducky enlightens us.

“And?” Gibbs and I question him.

“What kind of person would I be if I had this knowledge and I didn’t share it with you?”

“That’s what you were gonna ask that, right? About the tox screen?” Tony begs Gibbs when we leave autopsy at the same time Palmer enters.

“Are you done sucking Gibbs off?” I question Tony, before adding aster seeing Palmer, “I don’t like him. When Gerald return, he better be gone.”

“Alice, Gerald can’t return because of his injury,” Gibbs whispers to me.

“I want him to return. He’s my friend.”

“Any prints beside Lieutenant Johnson’s?” Gibbs questions Abby in the lab latter that day.

“I got a partial that isn’t his,” Abby answers him.

“Run it through AFIS and any other data base you can think of.”

“Done and done.”

“What else do you got for me, Abs?”

“The D-link is electrolytically coated with a protective oxide. I used Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy to compare the chemistry between the factory specs and the link that failed.”

“IS that all necessary?” I ask Abby.

“If I just came right out and told you what I’d found, you would be bored.”

“What’d you find?”

“Again, I live with Kate, nothing is more boring,” I repeat to Abby making her smile this time.

“The chemical composition of the oxide isn’t the same,” Abby explains.

“Couldn’t that just be from two different production batches?” Gibbs questions her while hiding a smile at what I said.

“Possibly.”

“Where is that, ‘but?’ I know there is a ‘but,’” I state.

“You are correct, oh great one. I used a scanning electron microscope with an x-ray diffractive attachment and did a composition analysis. The one on the left is the D-link I got from the manufacturer. The one on the right is Lieutenant Johnson’s,” Abby inform us while pulling up x-ray and results on what he did.

“They’re not the same,” Tony exclaims.

“That’s because one is steel and the other is sixty six three T six aluminium.”

“So the manufacturer makes the D-link in both metals?”

“Actually, they don’t.”

“Then how do you explain that?”

“Easy. Someone handmade a D-link out of a much weaker metal and then swapped it with Lieutenant Johnson’s real one.”

“It wasn’t an accident,” Gibbs declares.

“Nope. Looks like murder.

“I know this is a difficult time,” Gibbs says to the victim’s wife in her living room.

“When your husband brought his gear home, where did he keep it?” Kate questions her.

“Usually in the garage. Sometimes he’d leave it in the car,” Denise, the victim’s wife, answer Kate.

“Did he ever bring it in the house?” I ask her.

“Why?”

“Someone may have tampered with his equipment,” Gibbs informs her.
“Tampered? Why would anybody do that?” Denise questions us in confusion as the doorbell rings, “I keep expecting him to walk through that door.”
“I am so sorry,” Edna, Denise's friend, says to her while pulling her into a hug making Denise lose her battle with her emotions and start crying.
“Take a look around, Kate. Tony, let’s check out the garage,” Gibbs orders them quietly.
“Woah!” Tony exclaims when we get to the garage.
“Nice car,” Gibbs agrees with him.
“I want one,” I state while looking it over.
“Oh, it’s not just a car, boss. This is a sixty-six Mustang. Revolutionary in its day,” Tony resights the car specs to us.
“You’re not going to start giving me all the vital stats on this car, are you?” Gibbs questions him in distaste.
“Thunder-ball.”
“Let me rephrase that, DiNozzo. You’re not going to give me the vital stats on this car.”
“If someone was going to break in to get at his gear, their choices were limited, garage door or the back door. Lock works. No sign of forced entry. Whoever switched his D-link, I don’t think it was done here.”
“Yeah. Yeah. It does seem that way.”

Who had access to your climbing gear?” Gibbs questions Rainer when we get into a hanger.
“That depends. Lines and harnesses are usually kept in a rope locker,” Rainer answers him without answering what we all know Gibbs is asking about, the D-links.
“What about D-links?” Tony spells it out for him.
“Not a controlled item. Most of my men take their personal gear like that home with them.”
“Anyone in the unit could have had access to Johnson’s?” Kate asks him in surprise.
“I suppose so.”
“How many men in your unit, Commander?” I inquire of the commander.
“That information is classified, Agent.”
“Commander Rainer,” A voice calls out.
“What a surprise,” I mumble.
“I’ll be right back,” Rainer states before walking to a container.
“There’s enough ammo here to take over a small country,” Gibbs states.
“How small?” Tony questions him.
“Open it,” Rainer calls out, once the door is open he turns to us and says, “I appreciate that you have a job to do, but as far as we’re concerned, this was a training accident.”
“What if I was to tell you it wasn’t?” I question him.
“I was there, Agent. I saw Johnson’s D-link.”
“It was broken. What you saw was a fake,” Gibbs informs him making him stop glaring at me to look at Gibbs.
“Someone substituted Lieutenant Johnson’s D-link with one made from inferior metal,” Kate taps onto the end of Gibbs.
“Metal that was designed to fail,” Tony adds next.
“Sergeant?” Rainer questions another person without commenting on what he was just informed.
“Sir,” the sergeant responds.
“Security badge.”
“Sir.”
“Anything you see or hear is considered classified at the highest level. I’ll assist you in any way I can, as long as it doesn’t compromise our primary mission.”
“Which you can’t tell us,” I state.
“I will tell you it’s absolutely vital to national security.”
“Not much help in a murder investigation,” Kate utters.
“Well, that’s the best I can do. I’ve got a backup team waiting. But if there’s someone deliberately
trying to sabotage this mission, I need to know,” Rainer orders us before turning and calling out to Folsom, “Get Admiral Barner on the secure line. Tell him task force x-ray may have been compromised.”

“Yes, sir,” Folsom responds.

“Who else knew Johnson was going to be rappelling last night?” Gibbs questions him.

“No one outside this unit. My men have been in total isolation for the past ten days. No contact with the outside world,” Rainer informs Gibbs.

“Any security breaches?” Kate inquires of him.

“One petty officer made a few unauthorized calls to his wife.”

“He was in Johnson’s squad?” Tony probes him.

“He was. Petty officer Vengal. Lieutenant Johnson counselled him on following orders.”

“What kind of sailor is Vengal?” I question him.

“Young, headstrong. Like to be the centre of attention.”

“Basically a SEAL,” Gibbs says with a small smile.

“Johnson rode him pretty hard, but that was his job.”

“I’ll need to talk to him as well as anyone else on Johnson’s team.”

“Not a problem. They’re no longer the primary team on the mission.”

“What’s our time frame here?”

“We’re inside a thirty eight hour window. If you don’t find out what happened by then, we scrub the mission.”

“Tony, get with whoever’s in charge of the climbing gear. I want every rope, D-link and harness checked,” Gibbs orders Tony when we get to the main floor hanger.

“You got it, boss,” Tony responds to him.

“I’ll escort Agent DiNozzo. Brave team’s bunkered in here,” Folsom informs us without any emotion in his voice.

“How’d you get along with your lieutenant, Petty officer Vengal?” Gibbs questions Vengal once we have entered the bravo team’s quarters.

“He was a good SEAL, sir,” Vengal answers him with a well-practised answer.

“But you didn’t like him,” Kate states.

“We had different styles, ma’am.”

“His style was to ride your ass,” I declares.

“Yes, ma’am.”

“Why did you breach security?” Gibbs inquires of him.

“Excuse me, sir.”

“You called your wife. Why?” Kate reminds him.

“She’s pregnant. I… I wanted to check up on her, ma’am.”

“I checked your service record. Lieutenant Johnson wrote you up for an unauthorized absence two weeks ago,” I states.

“I had to take my wife to the doctor. Why are you asking me about the Lieutenant?”

“Because we’re looking for the man who murdered him,” Gibbs informs him.

“Lieutenant Johnson’s last two calls were made while in isolation. Both were to Father Clannon,” Kate reads off her phone when we return to the hanger.

“The lieutenant writes up Vengal for calling his pregnant wife during lockdown then makes two calls himself? It doesn’t make sense,” Gibbs declares.

“Agent Gibbs? Eddie Kramer, CIA. Is there someplace we can talk?” Kramer questions us.

“Yeah. How about right here? Whatever you say to me, you can say to my team.”

“Okay. Your investigation into Lieutenant Johnson’s death is very important to us.”

“Yeah? Why’s that?” I question him.

“Well, the SEALs are part of a multi-agency task force that’s been training for a very specific mission.”
“Which you’re not going to tell me about,” Gibbs finished for him.
“You’d have to be read into the program and we don’t have the time.”
“Bloody red tape,” I mumble.
“And you think that someone inside this task force tampered with Johnson’s equipment?” Kate questions him.
“I’m very concerned. There’s an initial vetting process for SEALs. And for this mission they were further vetted by the CIA,” Kramer explains to us.
“If they’ve gone through all that,” Tony trails off.
“Then we’re dealing with someone who’s very clever. In thirty-four hours, a C one forty one will be fuelled and ready to go. We need to know who swapped that D-link out and why. Otherwise, four months of planning will go out the window. I’ll tell you everything that we know, I want you to do the same.”
“Sure. Sounds good to me,” Gibbs agrees.
“I’ll give you this.”
“Abs, what’s up?” Gibbs questions Abby into his phone. “He’s okay. Yeah? What’s the unexpected part? Anyone we know?”

“She was eighteen when she was arrested for joyriding,” Kate reads off her PDA while we get out of the car and walk up the path to the house.
“Joyriding. It sounds so much better than grand theft auto. There’s something almost spiritual about it.” Tony rambles.
“Well, she said she didn’t know the car was stolen. Her boyfriend said he borrowed it from a friend.”
“Oh, the old blame-it-on-the-boyfriend excuse. One of the classics, but it never works. Even when they are the reason for it happening,” I complain making Kate give me a disgusted look.
“Anything else?” Gibbs questions Kate before she can snap at me.
“I was saving the best for last,” Kate brags.
“Why?”
“How much time have you been spending with Abby and Ducky?” I question her.
“Denise Johnson works at a jewellery story. She makes custom metal jewellery. Oh, and yesterday when I was in the den I saw something that made it seem like Johnson may have been sleeping in there,” Kate continues while reaching over and hitting me.
“What kind of things?” I question her.
“Alarm clock, pillow, and blanket.”
“Something’s really been bothering me. What kind of sick and twisted logic makes you think the boyfriend is always to blame? Huh?” Tony integrates me.
“Can we just have a minute?” Gibbs question Denise when she opens the door.

Of course my fingerprints are on there. You can find my fingerprints on almost anything Rick owned, except maybe his hunting rifles,” Denise snaps at us after she lead us into the living room of her house.
“We had to ask,” Kate defends us.
“You’re not married, are you, Agent Todd?”
“No,” Kate answers her after a beat of silence.
“Well, a lot of husbands leave a trail when they come home. I was constantly picking up after him.”
“How was your relationship with your husband?” Gibbs inquires of her.
“It was fine.”
“He wasn’t sleeping in the den?” Tony questions her.
“We had our problems, like any married couple.”
“What were they?” I question her.
“None of your business.”
“I’m sorry if we upset you,” Kate says.
“What were you expecting? You come into my home and basically accuse me of having something
to do with my husband’s death.”
“We never thought you killed him, we just have to follow every lead so that when we find the killer
he can’t turn around and accuse us of leaving a stone unturned. Because if that happened he could
get away with killing your husband,” I explain to her softly.
“Did your husband have a computer?” Gibbs questions her after I finished.
“We have a laptop,” Denise explains to him.

“Her explanation made sense,” Kate states once we have left the house.
“Doesn’t mean she isn’t guilty,” Gibbs responds.
“Do you honestly think she had anything to do with it?”
“I’ve seen a single mother drown her children because her new boyfriend didn’t like them. Nothing
surprise me.”

“Interesting how she pegged you for unmarried,” Tony informs Kate.

“Here’s a page thirteen Lieutenant Johnson wrote after Petty Officer Vengal got into a fight in town.
He said he didn’t start the fight, he was just protecting himself,” Tony reads out once we get back to
the squad room.
“It’s not in Vengal’s service report,” Kate informs us.
“There’s ore. This is from an undated fitness report. Under comments, Lieutenant Johnson wrote;
‘though Petty Officer Vengal is an outstanding sailor and no doubt will make a fine Petty Officer first
class, at this point I think he needs a little seasoning and I am not recommending him for
promotion.’”
“Also not in his service report.”
“So how can that be?”
“Rainer said Johnson rode Vengal pretty hard. My guess is that was part of his carrot and stick
approach. He wrote the page thirteen, showed it to Vengal,” Gibbs theories what may have
happened.
“And never formally filed it,” Kate states.
“So if the guy cleans up his act, then Johnson would just toss the page thirteen like it never existed,”
Tony declares.
“Okay, why did Johnson include the counselling sheet he wrote when Vengal was late?”
“That’s just a slap on the wrist. Page thirteen is serious.”
“Anything else?” I question them.
“Nope. They paid the bills, sent e-mails to friends, normal stuff,” Tony informs us while Kate talks
into her phone.
“Thank you very much, doctor,” Kate says into the phone before hanging up.
“You seem bothered,” Tony says to Kate after a moment of silence.
“That was Mrs Vengal’s doctor. Petty officer Vengal did take her to see him, but not on the day that
he told Lieutenant Johnson he did. He lied.”
“Get Vengal in here,” Gibbs orders them.
“Eee, boss. I’m not sure those guys are going to let him go anywhere,” Tony informs Gibbs.
“Convince them, Tony,” Gibbs overlaps him.
“You have a gun. Can’t you just shot them?” I question Tony.
“I was down in the evidence locker looking for a fingerprint kit and this started vibrating. Freaked
me out,” Abby informs Gibbs while running over to Gibbs desk and handing him an evidence bag
with a phone in it.
“Thanks, Abs,” Kate and Gibbs says while Kate opens the bag and gets the phone out.
“Lieutenant Johnson got a text message,” Kate says while opening the message and reading out,
“Why weren’t you there?”
“Who sent it?” I question her.
“This is weird. It’s an e-mail message forwarded from an internet account that shows up as a text
message on his cell phone.”
“English, Kate,” Gibbs snaps.
“Does anyone understand a word she just said?” I overlap Gibbs in confusion.
“Okay, I can set up my internet account so that if somebody e-mails me on my computer and I’m not there the e-mail will automatically be forwarded to my cell phone,” Kate explains to us.
“What’s the weird part?” Gibbs inquires of her.
“Well, the e-mail account that this was forwarded from is Dave Smith at conceal-mail dot com. That’s not Johnson’s e-mail address.”
“You sure?”
“Let me rephrase that. It’s not Lieutenant Johnson’s email account on his home computer, but he could have opened an account on another computer.”
“Under an assumed name,” I state my question without asking it.
“Anybody can. But why would somebody with a top security clearance have an email account under an assumed name?”
“What if I wanted to get into that account?” Gibbs questions Kate when no one can answer her.
“Get a search warrant for the servers.”
“We don’t have time for a warrant. What’s a quicker way?”
“Hack into the server.”
“Yes. Know you are living a little,” I say while punching the air.
“I can’t believe I just said that. I would have never suggested that before I started working here.”
“Before you started working here, you wouldn’t have come to work other a date without coming home. But as I said you are starting to live life to the fullest without the red tape.”
“You’re welcome. Get McGee over here. Have him work with Abby. Tell him to do whatever it takes to get that information,” Gibbs orders.
“I… are you sure we need to do that?” Kate questions Gibbs.
“Do you have a problem with McGee?”
“No me.”
“McGee has a problem with Abby because he shared his feelings and she didn’t return them,” I explain to Gibbs softly into his ear so only he hears me while smirking at Tony because he doesn’t know while everyone else does.
“Well then tell him to get his butt over here! When you’re down with that, we’re going to pay a visit to Father Clannon,” Gibbs exclaims.
“I guess I was more persuasive than I thought,” Clannon says to Kate when we arrive at the church.
“Well, well, well, looky here. Kate having a guy interested him her? How much did you pay him to say that?” I demand of Kate.
“Actually, I’m here in an official capacity, not to go to confession,” Kate informs him while shoving me, making me fall into Gibbs chest.
“Well, you can always kill two birds with one stone. I’m hearing them in fifteen minutes,” Clannon tries to convince Kate.
“You should see stuff,” I pipe up.
“I am.”
“No you’re not.”
“This is Special Agent Gibbs and Alice,” Kate introduces us.
“I think I saw you at Denise’s house,” Clannon says to us.
“Yeah,” Gibbs states without any emotion in his voice.
“Welcome to Saint Matthews.”
“Thank you.”
“Do you mind if we ask a few questions about Lieutenant Johnson?” I question him.
“No, please. Go right ahead,” Clannon says to us.
“His death wasn’t an accident. Someone switched a piece of his equipment with an inferior version,” Gibbs informs him.
“That’s what broke when he was repelling down the cliff,” Kate adds onto the end.
“Did Lieutenant Johnson ever tell you anything that might be able to help us?” I question him.
“Rick and I talked about many things. As a priest I can’t break the seal of confession,” Clannon explains to us without happing us at all.
“So he confessed something you can’t talk about?” Gibbs question the only helpful word he just said.
“No, I didn’t… I didn’t say that.”
“Okay. Okay. What about the two phones calls he made to you just before he was murdered?” I question him before Gibbs can say anything.
“Were in the service, agent Gibbs?” Clannon turns to Gibbs.
“Marines,” Gibbs states.
“Semer fidelis. Always faithful. That was your motto, your code?”
“Yes, it is.”
“And did you ever have circumstances that allowed you to turn your back on that code?”
“I guess there’s no way we could phrase the question to allow you to answer it?” Kate question Clannon when Gibbs refuses to answer the question.
“No, there’s not. And you sure you won’t stick around?”
“Maybe next time.”
“That means no,” I cut in.
“Very good,” Gibbs says while lighting a candle.
“Who was that for?” Kate asks Gibbs while he just walks away.
“No change,” Gibbs says into his phone while we are all in the garage that night, “That’s not going to happen.” Gibbs hangs up the phone and says to us, “All right. Let’s pretend we don’t know anything.”
“Pretend? What do you know because I know nothing,” I say in confusion at his choice of wording.
“That’s not much of a stretch,” Tony agrees with me.
“Let’s start from the beginning,” Gibbs orders us.
“Someone substituted a phony D-link for Lieutenant Johnson’s real one,” Kate summaries.
“When?”
“They had been rappelling exercise two weeks before without a problem,” Tony answers Gibbs.
“It has to be in that two week window.” I state.
“Well, nine days out of the two week period they were in isolation,” Kate corrects me.
“If someone outside the unit pulled the switch, they had a five day period to do it. Who had the best opportunity?” Gibbs questions him.
“The wife.”
“The victim,” I add making Kate give me a look in disbelieve, “What? He had the time, ability and the opportunity to do it.”
“What about the best friend – Clannon?” Gibbs add while giving me a thoughtful look.
“Gibbs, he’s a priest!” Kate exclaims in disbelief again.
“Yeah, so?”
“Okay, he had opportunity, but no motive.”
“That we know of. What was the wife’s motive?”
“Well, they were sleeping in different bedrooms would indicate they were arguing about something. You know something about that,” Tony has the balls to say to Gibbs but after Gibbs stares at him he adds, “Sorry, boss.”
“Who had the skill to make a D-link?” I question them.
“The wife made metal jewellery. She could make a D-link,” Kate hastily informs me.
“The wife wasn’t having an affair with someone at the jewellery store? A jealous husband?” Gibbs questions her.
“Our investigation indicates nothing like that.”
“Financial?” I asks them next.
“Normal,” Tony answers once he checked the reports.
“Motive, method, opportunity. The wife had all three,” Gibbs says to us.
“One other person had the opportunity,” I state making everyone give me a look making me add,
“The victim.”
“Iced cream’s here!” Ducky says while walking over to us and placing it down on the bench we are
working at.
“Thank god! I’m starved!” Tony exclaims while grabbing the ice cream but Gibbs gives him a look
making him add, “I can wait.”
“Duck, what are you doing here? It’s the middle of the night.” Gibbs questions Ducky.
“How could I be at home in my warm and comfortable bed knowing my brethren were toiling away
in the name of national security?” Ducky attempts to lie to Gibbs.
“Couldn’t sleep, huh?”
“Not a wink.”
“Neighbours again?”
“Or as I like to refer to them, the devil’s spawn.”
“Well, it’s good to see you, Duck. We could use a new pair of eyes around here.”
“I’m afraid the freshness date on my eyes expired a while back. However, I do have corrective
lenses.”

“Looks like we’re back to square one again,” I complain we Ducky can’t help us find anything.
“I don’t seem to have been much help.” Ducky says sadly.
“Well that’s okay, Duck. DiNozzo there sure enjoyed the ice cream,” Gibbs says while nodding over
to where Tony finishes of the ice cream.
“Well, if I have any brain storm…”
“Yeah, we’ll be here.”
“I wish I had a better idea of how all this repelling stuff worked. Then it might be easier to figure out
what happened,” Kate says while clicking her pen.
“I have… kind of crazy idea,” Tony says.
“Hmm. Those are never comforting words coming from you.”
“Do you have any other kind?” I question Tony while sticking a bit of Kate’s her in her ear.
“What?”

“No! No way!” Kate exclaims when she is on the top of the raised platform that is still on the floor
getting ready to repel down to see how it is done.
“You’ll do fine. Push this down and clamp it onto your harness like that. You’re ready to go,” Gibbs
questions her after tighten it.
“Uh… it’s like I’m about to throw up,” Kate answer him.
“Guide hand. Right here. Break hand. If you want to stop, clamp down on this and put you thumb
right at the centre of your butt,” Gibbs explains to Kate while placing her hands where they need to
be.
“All set down here, boss,” Tony calls up.
“Remember what I told you.”
“Todd on rappel!” Kate calls down to us.
“DiNozzo on belay!” Tony calls back.
“Are you ready?” Gibbs questions Kate one last time.
“You know, Gibbs, I kind of think I’ve got the gist of it now. Its fine,” Kate says to him.
“You’re doing great,” Gibbs says before pushing her off the lift making her scream in fear again.
“See? Now you know what it feels like,” Tony says to Kate once she gets to the bottom.
“No fair, no one ever said that someone gets to push Kate I wanted to do that. Also on a side note, can I try now?” I questions Gibbs.
“What?” Tony questions Kate when she just stares at the D-link while Gibbs brings the lift back down to the ground.
“The fake D-link is lighter than the real one,” Kate explains to us.
“Okay.”
“Johnson was an experienced climber. Why didn’t he notice the difference?”
“Get out of that. We have less than an hour,” Gibbs orders Kate while leading me to the elevator.
“Right here in front of us the whole time,” Gibbs says when he walks back into the garage the following day.
“Lath, vice, acetylene torch,” Tony labels what we are looking at.
“Everything you need to make a D-link,” Kate agrees with Tony.
“Didn’t I call it?” I question Kate making her elbow me while Gibbs phone rings.
“Yeah, Gibbs. You got the emails? What did they say? Love letters? To who?” Gibbs questions Abby before turning to us and saying, “Abby and McGee cracked Johnson’s secret e-mail account. We got our answer.”
“I suspected something a couple years ago. I’m not sure what I saw, it’s not the type of thing a women thinks about her husband,” Denise informs us in her living room where we are talking to her.
“How did you find out?” Gibbs questions her.
“Two weeks ago Rick told me he was going quail hunting for the weekend, which wasn’t unusual except…”
“Quails ain’t in season at the moment,” I finish for her.
“I knew. He had once told me about a GPS device the SEALs use for surveillance. I bought something similar online and I hid it in his car. He drove to downtown Baltimore. His car didn’t move for two days. I saw Rick come out with him. They hugged. He watched Rick leave… wave goodbye. You want to hear something funny? I was hoping it was another woman.”
“What happened after that?” Gibbs questions her.
“I confronted him. He didn’t try to deny it. I guess he felt relieved. He said he had an e-mail account and that’s how he communicated with his – mi told him he had to make a choice.”
“Why didn’t you tell us that?” I demand of her.
“I didn’t want to embarrass his friends, his family. Rick was very religious. And I was hoping that didn’t have anything to do with his death.”
“Yeah, but you knew it did,” Gibbs reminds her.
“Yeah. I saw him working on his D-link. Rick dedicated his life to the Navy. Five generations of his family have served honourably. But maybe if I hadn’t confronted him… I wake up every morning and I can’t stand to look at myself in the mirror. I mean, why couldn’t he tell me?” Denise cries to us while Gibbs phone starts to ring.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone. “It was suicide. You’re good to go.”
“Alice,” Gibbs calls me while running up to me in the parking lot of NCIS where I am starting to walk home because Kate isn’t there.
“What’s up Gibbs?” I ask him will turning around to look at him.
“Do you need a lift home?”
“You don’t have to but I would like that.”

“You don’t have to do that Gibbs,” I say to him in surprise but I take the present any way and open it to see that he has replaced the belt Kate and Tony stabbed ages ago. It is a black belt with a knife holder and knife on the right with a new horse buckle like my old one but in gold instead of silver, “Thank you, I love it,” I exclaim while leaning over and gently kissing his cheek in thanks but he turned his head at the last moment so I really kissed the side of his mouth.
“Mister Prime Minister, welcome to the White House,” President Bush says on the TV over the counter at Kate’s coffee house.

“What do you think about what Sharon is doing?” Sachs, the man in front of us in line, questions us.

“Assassinating Hamas leaders or pulling settlements out of Gaza?” Kate question him.

“Either. I’m just trying to start a conversation. I’m John. AG department.”

“Kate. NCIS.”

“Hi. Really?”

“Yes, why?”

“I’ve never seen you. I’m at NCIS twice a month.”

“You are?”

“Yeah. I specialize in actuarial analysis. Hail and storm damage.”

“What NCIS do you think she works for?” I inquire of him in annoyances.

“National Crop Insurance Service.”

“Idiot,” I mumble under my breath.

“That’s us. Oh, yeah. She’s a whiz on how corn losses affect the pork belly futures,” Gibbs says to him while cutting in front of us before removing me from the line over to a chair.

“How corn losses affect pork belly futures?” Kate hisses at Gibbs when she gets to the table and chair.

“Rule number seven. Always be specific when you lie,” Gibbs informs her while kicking out a chair for her to sit on while placing her coffee in front of the chair.

“Why are you bring me coffee from your caffeine dealer two blocks away?”

“And where’s mine?” I question Gibbs.

“And don’t us rule seven.”

“Do you want that or not?” Gibbs questions Kate while handing me the second coffee he was carrying.

“Thank you,” I say to him.

“I take my coffee with milk and sweetener,” Kate informs her while I take a sip of Gibbs’ coffee.

“Taste it,” Gibbs orders her while taking a sip of the coffee after I put it back down.

“It’s a little strong.”

“Strong’s better.’

“Gibbs, you’re making me nervous. Scary scenarios are popping into my head. Like you’re here to fire me or to tell me that I’m going undercover as DiNozzo’s wife.”

“Can you please send her undercover as DiNozzo’s wife?” I beg of Gibbs.

“I want you to profile a terrorist,” Gibbs orders her.

“What terrorist?” Kate questions Gibbs.

“The one you couldn’t stab.”

“Ducky tell you that? It’s true.”

“Why?” I demand of her.

“His eyes. I was looking into his eyes and they looked kind.”

“Did they look kind when he shot out Gerald’s shoulder? Or me? Or Gibbs?”

“You ask me why I couldn’t stab him and I told you.”

“That is a pathetic reason, he shot Gerald and me. And you think he was kind after that?”

“Contrary to conventional wisdom, Kate, eyes can lie. You meet him again, don’t forget that,” Gibbs orders her.

“I won’t. I won’t,” Kate promise him.

“Yes, you will because you have a crush on the fucker,” I snap at her.

“No I don’t.”

“Profile him,” Gibbs orders at her while gently placing his hand on my leg to get me to calm down.
“He is not an Islamic fanatic. Never used their rhetoric. No mention of Jihad, Allah, infidels. Whatever drives him, it isn’t martyrdom,” Kate profiles the terrorist.

“Revenge?”
Could be. Maybe money.”
“A Hamas terrorist in it for the money?”
“Well, he’s not in it for the seventy virgins. He’d have no trouble attracting women.”
“That is why Kate couldn’t stab him. She has a crush on him,” I exclaim what Gibbs is thinking.

“Don’t go there.”

“Why money?” Gibbs question Kate while shushing me.
“I just get the feeling that he lives large. He was well groomed. Manicured nails. Perfect teeth. Salon style hair. Gibbs, what is it with your hair?”
“What’s wrong with my hair?”

“Nothing. Nothing. Your hair is… you.”

“Yeah, thank you. What else?”

“He’s intelligent. Bold. Willing to take big risks.”

“Why did he give me a chance to kill him?”

“And why didn’t he give Ducky the same chance? But gave you that chance to stab him?” I add onto the end.

“He had a flack vest. Knew you’d double tap him in the chest,” Kate answers Gibbs while kicking me under the table to shut me up.

“What if I shot him in the head?” Gibbs questions Kate while gently squizzing my arm to stop me from retaliating to Kate.

“It’s a risk he had to take to make his escape plan work.”

“No, he did not. He could have killed me in cold blood. H-R-T comes in, throws a flash bang. Either way he escapes just the same.”

“You’re right. Why’d he give you a shot at him?”

“He needs to face death to feel alive. Maybe feel anything.”

“Good morning, Kate!” Tony exclaims when he walks into the squad room.

“That grin can only mean one thing,” Kate exclaims while staring at Tony.

“Yeah, thank you. What else?”

“Nothing. Nothing. Your hair is… you.”

“Yeah, thank you. What else?”

“He’s intelligent. Bold. Willing to take big risks.”

“Why did he give me a chance to kill him?”

“And why didn’t he give Ducky the same chance? But gave you that chance to stab him?” I add onto the end.

“Good morning, Kate!” Tony exclaims when he walks into the squad room.

“What’s this one’s name?” Kate questions him.

“She’s Swedish.”

“You don’t know her name. How can you be in love with someone and not… I forgot. It’s you we’re talking about.”

“You have mail,” Tony computer informs him.

“Let’s see who misses me today,” Tony exclaims him while opening his e-mail.

“Tiffany. Crystal. Fanny. The girls down on the farm,” Kate guesses.

“You hacked into my computer?”

“No. ever since you used mine, all I get is porn spam.”

“Like you never opened an X-rated site.”

“This is Kate you are talking to,” I remind him.

“Never,” Kate exclaims in disgusted.

“You know that’s sad,” Tony exclaims.

“Why?”

“Cause I believe you. Where’s the boss?”

“M-tac. Talking to Bahrain,” I explain to him.

“Tony, I’m worried about him,” Kate exclaims to Tony while looking at M-TAC.

“Bowie was killed at the Alamo.”
“I know. I saw the movie.”
“Tony, he’s fixated on that terrorist.”
“Not fixated, determined. Like Tommy Lee Jones in the Fugitive. Like The Duke in the Searchers. Mell Gibson in Payback.”
“Do you even do anything but watch movies and get laid?” I question Tony.
“Do you ever read a book?” Kate questions Tony.
“Kate, determined is good in a cop,” Tony exclaims.
“Not when it turns into obsession. Gibbs surprised me at D.C Beans this morning. He bought me coffee and then he probed me about that terrorist like it happened yesterday, not months ago.”
“That is serious. He’s never bought me coffee.”
“Tony…”

Gibbs was like this just before his last divorce,” Ducky explains to us at a café for lunch.
“We can’t divorce him, Ducky.” Kate informs Ducky.
“You wouldn’t want to, my dear, no matter how gruff he becomes.”
“Hey, maybe he’ll take his frustrations out on that mysterious redhead instead of us,” Tony exclaims in hope with his mouth full of food.
“Must you talk with your mouth full,” Kate exclaims in disgust.
“No.”
“Who was Gibbs chasing last time?” I question Ducky.
“Had to be a redhead,” Tony states making Kate hit him on the back of his head. “You’re not Gibbs! You do that again and you’re going to be wearing that tuna salad.”
“He was after a child murdered. Victim was five. Pretty little thing. A deviate had sexually abused her and then beaten her to death,” Ducky explains to us.
“Stuff like that makes me sick,” Kate and I exclaim in disgust before I finish, “Did Gibbs catch him?”
“Oh, yes. But it took nearly a year. By then a second girl had been murdered. Gibbs was a bit difficult to live with for 4 a while after that.”
“It’s her!” Tony exclaims while pointing to a jogger.
“Who?”
“The love of my life!”
“When is he going to grow up, Ducky?” Kate questions Ducky while watching Tony run after the women.
“It’s in the genes, my dear. In Italy most boys Tony’s age are still living with Mama.”
“Oh gosh. Gotta head out. I’ve got a Gitmo conference in twenty minutes. It was Tony’s turn to buy,” Kate exclaims while getting up.
“I’ll take care of it.”
“No, no.”
“My treat.”
“No, that’s not right.”
“Go, Kate. It’s been a long pale winter. I need some sun before returning to my human jigsaw puzzle. You don’t want to go there.”
“You’re right. Thanks for lunch, Ducky. Are you coming Alice?”
“I’ll stay with Ducky, if that is okay Ducky?” I question him.
“It’s fine. And you’re quite welcome,” Ducky informs us.

Hey Abby,” I say when I walk into the lab after Ducky gave me a lift back to the office.
“Hey Alice, what are you doing down here?” Abby questions me.
“Avoiding McGee and Gibbs.”
“Why?”
“Gibbs is pissed about the terrorist while McGee makes me want to stab him. What are you working
“Nothing much.”
“Have you ran my DNA yet?”
“Yeah. It is still running. I’ll tell you when I get a hit.”
“Cool. Thank you for this. So you hear about Tony’s latest girlfriend?”
“No, what?”
“He is in love with her but he doesn’t even when her name.”
“That is hilarious.”
“I know. So did you work out your think with McGee?”
“Yeah, we did.”
“That’s good.”

“Have you heard from Kate?” Gibbs questions us when he walks into the squad room.
“No,” McGee answer while I just shake our head no.
“I tried her home. Not there. Gonna give her a paddle?” Tony questions Gibbs.
“Huh?” McGee says while giving Tony a confused look.
“It has to do with a creek Kate and I are up.”
“Ah, good old shit creek. I love shit creek, you catch the best fish there,” I exclaim.

“Is she okay?” Tony questions Gibbs who finally get a hold of Kate.
“Food poisoning,” Gibbs informs him.
“Food poisoning?”
“I need coffee.”
“Well, what’s wrong? Other than not catching that Hamas guy.”
“The Hamas guy! The Terrorist!”
“The bastard! That ass!” I cut in
“We call him everything but his name, DiNozzo. Do you know why?”
“Because we don’t know his name?” Tony guesses.
“Because you’re not working a hot case. I want his name! I want it today! And don’t tell me it’s Moby Dick,” Gibbs snaps before turning and walking away.
“Wow!” McGee exclaims in surprise and fear.
“Kate’s right. I think Gibbs’ is losing it. You don’t really think he meant today, do you? Oh! This slammin’ girl that I’m supposed to take out. She’s Swedish,” Tony complains.
“I think if you try going on that date, we might be looking for your dead body,” I explain.
“Ah…” McGee says to Tony.
“Has this sweet accent…” Tony continues to go on about this date.
“Tony?”
“Every Swedish girl I’ve ever know has always let me…”
“Tony!”
“What?!?”
“He graduated from Edinburgh Medical College in ninety four,” McGee exclaim when he gets a hit on the terrorist.
“Good lord! So did I! Well, a few decades earlier, of course,” Ducky exclaims in surprise.
“Of course,” Abby agrees with him.
“Extraordinary. I wonder if the college should be informed.”
“Want to name him an honoured alumni?” Tony questions him.
“Oh, very amusing, Tony. But not when we have such notable as Lord Lister, Doctor Peter Mark Roget, and Sir Author Conan Doyle.”
“You have some famous alumni, Ducky,” McGee complements Ducky.
“We have something bigger to deal with, like the fucking terrorist still out there,” I snap at them.
“We should. The medical college is over four hundred years old. It traces its origins back to
seventeenth century barber surgeons who did blood-letting and bone setting,” Ducky rambles. “I’ll be doing some blood-letting if this huddle isn’t work-related,” Gibbs snaps over Ducky. “Hey boss, we got it,” McGee exclaims to Gibbs in excitement. “We’ve got a name!” Abby overlaps him. “Doctor Ari Haswari.” “He’s a graduate of my old medical school in Edinburgh,” Ducky informs us. “That’s great work, McGee. What’s with his name? Ari is Israeli. Haswari is Arab,” Gibbs questions us. “Maybe his folks are working on some sort of Middle East peace plan,” Abby theories. “McGee, find someone who knew him in Edinburgh.” “Already did, boss. I spoke to a Doctor Martin Sedwick, Pickford Mews, London. He and Ari were post graduate research assistants at the Edinburgh for Infectious Diseases,” McGee informs Gibbs. “That’s why Hamas chose him to recover the small pox virus. Doctor Sedwick said he was quite brilliant, always with beautiful women and always answered to Haswari… never Ari,” Tony explains to us. “I think I know why. His father was Doctor Benjamin Weinstein. His mother, Doctor Hosmiya Haswari. They worked in Jerusalem Hospital and never married.” “Ooh. Haswari didn’t like his Jewish daddy,” Abby exclaim in excitement. “Call him Ari,” Gibbs orders her. “Ari it is,” I overlap him. “Ari worked with his mother in a Gaza strip clinic until she died four years ago,” Tony continues to explain. “So he went from doctor to terrorist,” Abby asks us in confusion. “Rintizi was a doctor,” McGee says to us. “So was Che Guevara,” Ducky adds. “Jack the Ripper was a surgeon,” I cut Tony off. “He was never caught. That’s only a supposition. There’s a very interesting theory…” “Tony, let’s go! McGee, give me a GPS search on Kate’s cell phone. It’s off now but id it comes on I want coordinates,” Gibbs overlaps Ducky. “Kate’s at home, boss,” Tony reminds her. “She didn’t answer her phone. I don’t think she ate bad oysters for lunch.” “She had a tuna salad.” “Kate’s allergic to sea food and especially oysters,” I explain to Gibbs while all the blood leaves my face leaving me a so pale that I am almost see through. “Tony, that bastard got her,” Gibbs yells while walking into the elevator. “Boss,” Tony attempts to get Gibbs to calm down. “He’s got her!” XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX “What the hell where you thinking? Getting kidnapped and then just sitting around?” I yells out Kate once Gibbs and Tony saved her and we went home. “I didn’t do it on purposes,” Kate defends herself. “You could have called it in when you saw Ari but no, you tried taking him down herself.” “I was going to call it but…” “But nothing Kate. It was dangerous and stupid. Do you even think about what would happened to me with you died or we never found you?” “No. I promise to try and be more careful.”
“Anyone? And I mean anyone know when the air conditioner’s getting fixed? Huh? What about the name of the genius who invented windows that don’t open? And what are we on? A space ship? Windows should open,” Tony complains as we walk into the sticking hot squad room.

“Have you been working out?” Kate question him while putting her stuff at her desk and gesturing to Tony’s wife beater that is the only shirt he is wearing.

“All summer long. Thanks for finally noticing.”

“No, I mean right now, because you’re sweating like a pig and it’s not very attractive,” Kate informs him while sitting down only to shriek in surprise and jump up while looking down under her desk.

“Uh… morning, agent Todd,” McGee said from between Kate’s legs, looking up her skirt.

“McGee.”

“Yeah?”

“You have two seconds to tell me what you’re doing down there.”

“I’m… I’m upgrading the computer network and uh…”

“Time’s up,” Kate snaps while reaching down and grabbing McGee’s ear.

“No, I wasn’t looking. I swear. Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow! I wasn’t looking… I wasn’t looking… ow!”

“Tony,” Gibbs comes to a stop just past Tony’s and Kate’s desks.

“Yes, sir?” Tony questions Gibbs.

“Did I just see what I thought I say?”

“Yes, and I am scared for life,” I inform him from my spot at Gibbs desk.

“Out of respect for my co-workers, boss, I’d have to say… yeas, you did. And it’s very disturbing,” Tony explains to Gibbs.

“I agree. Put your damn shirt back on. This is a federal office building, not a gym. Damn, McGee. Why are you still here?” Gibbs questions McGee while getting into McGee’s face.

“Uh… the contractors – they won’t wire the network until the air conditioning’s fixed. It’s a union this so…” McGee stutters out to Gibbs.

“So you decided it’s more important for an NCIS special agent to crawl around all day by yourself?” “Man asked you a question,” Tony orders McGee when he fails to answer Gibbs.

“I just wanted it fixed before I returned to Norfolk,” McGee explains it to Gibbs.

“Yeah? You have any idea where thinking like this is gonna lead you?” Gibbs inquires of them.

“Yeah, do you, McGee?” Tony questions McGee.

“Promotion. You need any help, you ask Tony here. Looks like he can use the workout.”

“It’s not that difficult. So I guess I could do it myself,” McGee informs Tony when Tony gives him a look that say ‘I’m not going to help you.’

“Good answer,” Tony informs McGee.

“Don’t let him intimidate you, McGee. That’s my job today,” Kate snaps at McGee before answering her phone, “Agent Todd?”

“I didn’t look,” McGee explains to Tony

“Oh, no. I believe you. I just have a little question that I want to ask you. Is she a panty hose or a thong girl because I’m thinking thong,” Tong say to McGee making Kate punch him in the stomach, making him grunt in pain.

“We’ve got a problem, Gibbs,” Kate explains to Gibbs while he bangs his PDA onto his computer.

“I hate this think. Crap!” Gibbs exclaims.

“There’s a secretary from the Pentagon downstairs and she claims that her boss is being held hostage by his computer.

“I was right, computers will take over the world and kill us all,” I exclaim.

“See? There is a reason I don’t trust these things,” Gibbs says while picking up his broken PDA and shoving it into McGee’s chest and adding, “Here. Reboot that or something,” Before turning to Kate
and ordering her, “Send her up.”

“Reboot it?” McGee asks us once Gibbs has walked away.

“Or you can do what we always do,” Kate explains to him while Tony hands him a new PDA.

“It’s his third one this month. I am surprised that the director hasn’t made him go back to the old
notebook and pen,” I explain to McGee while walking away.

“‘You’ve got mail?’” Kate guesses what the computer said.

“No, it was this weird electronic voice, and then it cut off the second I entered the room. Look, I
know it sounds crazy, but I can’t tell you the rest until you promise that you won’t try to contact
him.”

“Whatever you’re afraid of, Miss Wilkes, we can handle it,” Gibbs tells her gently.

“He slipped this into a stack of folder and he told me to take the rest of the day off,” Shirley explains
to us while handing Gibbs a piece of paper.

“Office under electronic surveillance. Can’t leave! Jill and Sandy kidnapped. Must transfer two mil
to overseas account by eighteen hundred or they die. Contact NCIS. No one else,” I read out to
everyone.

“Finally someone appreciates us.”

“If anything should happen to them… I mean, she’s just a little girl, Agent Gibbs,” Shirley begs of
Gibbs.

“The Watson’s live in McLean. There’s no answer at home and their daughter Sandy didn’t show up
to school this morning. It says here she’s blind,” Kate reports about the missing lady’s once we have
returned to the squad room.

“Tony?” Gibbs questions while turning to Tony in his chair.

“I can confirm he’s the comptroller for J-SOC. Office is in the A-ring of the Pentagon. I’m pulling up
a schematic now,” Tony reports to him.

“J-SOC?” Kate and I ask in confusion.

“Joint Special Operations Command. They fund S.M.U. S.M.U. stands for…”

“Special Military Units. I worked with a few of them when I was Secret Service. So he can really
transfer this kind of money overseas?” Kate cuts Tony off.

“More if he needs to,” Gibbs informs her.

“Our bad guys would have to pass through five security checkpoints to get to Watson’s office,” Tony
informs him.

“Well, the Pentagon records all access,” Kate states.

“There’s twenty five thousand people working here, Kate,” Gibbs reminds her.

“By the time we’re done downloading that list, the government’s out two million dollars,” Tony
agrees with Gibbs.

“Or Watson’s family’s dead,” I snap at Tony.

“Well, it has to be someone on the inside. The pentagon is the most secure building in the world,”
Kate reminds us.

“They could be using a Trojan. She said that they were using his computer. A Trojan would give
them back door access,” McGee explains while sticking his head up from behind a random desk.

“You kiss your mother with that mouth, McGee?” Tony questions McGee.

“You kiss Abby with that mouth, McGee?” I overlap Tony.

“No, guys. A Trojan is a program. It’s like a virus that establishes a gateway into a computer and
allows a hacker to control the system,” McGee explains to us.

“It still doesn’t explain how it got into his machine,” Kate says what we are all thinking.

“Well, if they’re good they could do it from anywhere. They wouldn’t even have to set foot in the
“building.”
“How are they watching him then?” Tony questions McGee.
“Could be using a web cam.”
“Oh they could be lying,” I remind him.
“Kate, take McGee and search the Watson’s house. DiNozzo, I want everything there is on Watson and his family by the time I get back,” Gibbs hands out the assessments for the moment.
“Where are you going, boss?” Tony question Gibbs.
“And what do you want me to do?” I add onto the end.
“To talk to Captain Watson,” Gibbs answers Tony.
“Wait, Gibbs, if they’re watching him and you show up,” Kate reminds him.
“I’d better make sure they don’t notice me. Help Tony,” Gibbs orders me while walking away.
“That is not a good call.”
“Relax. You think Gibbs keeps that haircut to save on shampoo?” Tony questions Kate.
“XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX?
“He was right about one this. She is a little beauty,” the computer voice on Captain Watson says through the bug and camera Gibbs just planted.
“Okay, Gibbs. Your mike is coming in loud and clear. Who’s in the office with him? The devil?” Abby signs to Gibbs.
“Hey. You know, considering that no one in this room is actually deaf, that is really annoying,” Tony complains making Gibbs and Abby sign about him which makes me laugh my head off. “Hey, that was about me, wasn’t it?”
“Patch in the video, Abs,” Gibbs orders her gently.
“It’s not a very flattering angle,” Abby complains to Gibbs once she see the angle of the camera.
“Well, it’s the best I could do. What can you tell me about the voice?”
“It sounds like this particle physicist! I used to date. He had these tiny little Chiclet-like teeth and an Eiffel tower tat on his…”
“Again? What is with all you boyfriends? You have as many ex-boyfriends as Ducky has stories,” I state in surprise.
“You want this, Abby, or not?” Gibbs questions Abby while shaking a caf-pow.
“Okay, obviously it’s being disguised. I think I can filter it back to its original state,” Abby explains to us while attempting to do it.
“She is a little beauty. She is a little beauty,” the computer voice says but really fast.
“Yeah, okay. I’ll get that A.P.B. out on the Lollipop Guild right away,” Tony jokingly says to Abby making her smile.
“Patience, Tony,” Abby informs him.
“Little beauty. A little beauty,” the computer say in extremely slow motion but after a few minutes more she plays the unfiltered voice saying, “He was right about one thing. She is a little beauty.”
“Pretty cool, huh?”
“Not bad,” Abby informs her while handing her while handing her the caf-pow.
“Thank you.”
“Next thing I want you to do is hack into Watson’s computer. It’s the only link we have to the kidnapper.”
“Gibbs, we are talking about the Pentagon here. Even their encryptions have encryptions.”
“Yeah? That dirt bag sure managed it,” I remind her.
“It probably took him months! Our best bet is to ask the D.O.D. for access to their system.”
“First thing they’ll do is disconnect the connection. If that happens we’ll end up with two dead dependents,” Gibbs informs her.
“I don’t know if I can do it.”
“DiNozzo, get McGee on the hook.”
“No! I’ll get in.”
“Yeah.”
“Yeah.”
“I believe you,” Gibbs informs her before turning and walking away.
“I thought you worked your shit out with McGee,” I state in confusion.
“I did but I don’t want to work with him.”
“Relax. When’s the last time Gibbs was wrong? Discounting the whole marriage thing, of course,” Tony questions Abby.
“The terrorist, Ari, he had the chance to shoot him but was wrong when he shot him in the chest and not the head,” I remind him.

“DiNozzo, I need a way to communicate with Captain Watson,” Gibbs questions Tony while walking into the squad room.
“Communication part’s solved, boss. Earwig radio receiver. Used ‘em all the tie for undercover work back in Baltimore,” Tony informs to Gibbs while holding up an ear piece.
“How do we get it in his ear?” I inquire of Tony.
“Did I also mention there’s one tiny flaw in my plan?”
“DiNozzo, I show back up there as a Gunny, our guy’s going to get suspicious,” Gibbs states.
“Well, you think I can pass for a Marine?”
“No,” I state.
“I don’t know. Let’s shave your head and find out,” Gibbs states while staring at Tony.
“Actually, I was leaning more towards Merchant Marine kind of thing,” Tony defends himself and his hair cut.
“I’ve got a better idea. Don’t eat that. No, no!” Gibbs yells out Tony before reaching over and snatching his lunch.

“Five hours left, captain. Ring the tote,” the computer voice taunts the captain over the mic.
“I’ve managed to isolate nine hundred thousand,” Watson responds.
“I’d move faster if I was you,” the computer voice informs him right before Tony knocks onto the door and the voice adds, “You’re learning. You may answer.”
“Enter!”
“Hey, captain. You got your sweet and sour with extra pineapple. I figured you might want to change your order tomorrow. I hear we’re getting in some fresh duck,” Tony informs the captain while walking into the office and walking over to the desk.
“I’ll just stick with the usual.”
“All right. Eight seventy five today. How’s the family doing?”
“Fine. You?”
“Still having trouble communicating with the girlfriend. I talk… she doesn’t listen. What are you going to do?” Tony questions the captain while handing him the change with the ear mic.
“Oh, yeah. Sure. For you,” Watson says to Tony while putting in the mic and Tony grunts for no reason.
“Thanks, captain. See you tomorrow.”
“Freeze! Open your lunch. Show it to the camera. Now!” The computer voice orders the captain and the captain shows the computer in the food, “Enjoy,” the captain throws the food into the bin without eating it.
“Delivery complete,” Tony reports to us when he arrives in the corridor after delivering the food and mic.
“That’s good work, Tony,” Gibbs complements him.
“Thanks, boss. That means a lot.”
“If NCIS doesn’t work out, I hear General Lee’s Chinese Restaurant is hiring,” I inform Tony.
“Abs, get the Captain up on the feed,” Gibbs orders Abby.
“All right. You’re in,” Abby informs Gibbs after typing on her computer again.
“This is Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. If you can hear me cough once, Captain,” Gibbs says into the mic and Watson coughs, so Gibbs adds, “We are changing the game plan, skipper. When he contacts you again, tell him you want a good faith gesture on his part. Tell him that you want your daughter
returned now. Tell him if you don’t get her back you’re going to take your chances with the FBI. He’ll try to intimidate you, we have to call his bluff. Rub your brow if you have the courage to go this route. You are not alone, captain. We’re going to get through this together. I will be in touch. Okay, I want these feeds hardwired into M-TAC.”

“Done,” Abby yells when her computer beeps.

“We inside his computer?” I questions Abby in surprise.

“Oh, um… I think I’m…”

“Need help?” Gibbs finishes for her.

“Yeah.”

“All you had to do was ask. One of the smartest people I know told me that once.”

“Who?”

“You?”

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“The car is still in the driveway. No signs of a struggle inside. I think they may have known their kidnapper,” Kate reports to Gibbs once she returns to the squad room.

“Or been duped,” Gibbs adds onto the end.

“Well, it looks like you and Tony have been making some progress.”

“Not enough.”

“Time to update, captain,” the computer voice returns through the mic.

“I’m doing my best,” Watson snaps at his computer.

“Just make your deadline.”

“McGee, help Abby get into Watson’s computer,” Gibbs orders McGee before turning to Tony and ordering him, “Hey, come one. Let’s go.”

“A little short on deodorant today, Tony?” Kate questions Tony when she see he is still in the delivery boy clothe.

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“I’ve isolated nearly one point three million,” Watson says through the mic being played into M-TAC. “Now I want a gesture of good faith from you,” Watson adds.

“What kind of gesture, Captain?” the computer voice inquires of him.

“I want you to release my daughter immediately.”

“Not going to happen.”

“Why? Because they’re already dead? How do I know that’s not just a tape?! You listen to me. You let Sandy go right now or it’s over. I’m going to the FBI.”

“You’d never forgive yourself, you know.”

“This is the hard part, captain.”

“This is the hard part, captain. Don’t back down. Tell him you want to talk to your daughter,” Gibbs orders him over the mic in his ear.

“I want to speak to her!” Watson informs the computer voice. “Right now!”

“Plays the piano. Gifted, I hear. You don’t need eyes to play the piano… but you sure as hell need ears,” the computers voice snidely says on the computer and Sandy screams in pain.

“Sandy,” Watson calls out.

“One little tap. Monaural. Then the other ear, pop! Total silence and darkness forever,” the computer voice informs Watson while Sandy continues to cry.

“We can’t risk that,” Kate exclaims while watching the video.

“He’s bluffing. Stand your ground. Tell him if he does, that he’ll never see a penny,” Gibbs orders him.

“Gibbs…”

“Let her go unharmed or I swear you’ll never see a dime,” Watson snaps at the computer.

“I screwed up. I screwed it all up,” Watson complains in fear when nothing happened for a while.

“It’s only been fort minutes, captain. He will contact you soon,” I tell him softly in a calming tone of voice.

“Until then you have to stay strong. It’s our best chance of getting your family back,” Gibbs orders
him before turning to Kate and questioning her, “You got something to say?”
“We’re taking a really big risk here, Gibbs,” Kate states the fact like no-one knows that.
“Yeah, Kate? What happens to the little girl and her mother once this dirt bag gets the money?”
“What, you think he’ll kill them?”
“You’re the profiler. You tell me.”
“Yes,” I overlap Gibbs.
“Answer your phone, captain,” the computer orders Watson when his phone begins to ring.
“Where is she? Where’s my daughter!” Watson snaps at his computer.
“I said answer the phone, captain!”
“Yes?” Watson says into the phone but because his phone is not on speaker we can’t hear the other end. “Sandy? Sweetheart, where are you?” Watson turns to the computer while snapping at the computer, “Tell me where she is.”
“Lorton Amtrak station. You got your good faith gesture. Now get back to work,” the computer orders him.
“My people are on the way, Captain. Tell her stay where she is,” Gibbs orders the captain before turning to Tony and Kate and add, “Go get her.”
“I’m going with them,” I tell Gibbs making him node.
“Answer your phone, captain,” the computer orders Watson when his phone begins to ring.
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“Yes?” Watson says into the phone but because his phone is not on speaker we can’t hear the other end. “Sandy? Sweetheart, where are you?” Watson turns to the computer while snapping at the computer, “Tell me where she is.”
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“I’m going with them,” I tell Gibbs making him node.

“G-P-S locater strapped to the ankle. Audio and video surveillance built into their clothes,” Kate explains to Tony.
“Hey Sandy, I’m Alice. I’m surprise that you know who NCIS is,” I state making Kate and Tony give me looks that says shut up, “Do you want to know why?”
“Yeah.”
“Because we have meet everyone from the president to Kate and you are the first to know what NCIS stands for.”
“Well, then you know that we’re here to help you. Your daddy sent us,” Kate softly informs Sandy.
“We know what happened to you and your mum, but you’re safe now. Okay?” Tony questions Sandy in a soft voice too.
“I heard him,” Sandy suddenly informs us.
“Hey it’s okay,” I exclaim while gently pulling her into a hug when she starts crying again. “Let’s return to NCIS and Kate while give you her badge to hold, how does that sound?”
“There you go. Feel better now?” Ducky says to Sandy who is at Gibbs desk once we got back to NCIS. He has just clean and put a band aid on her knee that is scraped, as well as her face and arms that she has rope burns on them.
“Yes. Thank you,” Sandy thanks him with a small smile while holding me hand.
“You’ve been a very brave patient, so I think you deserve a surprise,” Ducky says to her while
pulling out a chocolate bar.
“A Hershey bar?”
“Yes. Are you sure you’re blinded?”
“I can smell it.”
“Oh, I’ll be right back then. I need a few moments to talk to my friend,” Ducky informs Sandy while walking over to Gibbs, Tony and Kate while I kneel down next to Sandy.
“Hey, it’s okay,” I whisper to Sandy before adding, “They may not sound like it but this team while save your mummy.”
“How do you know?” Sandy questions me softly.
“My sister was in danger not that long again and they saved her without any injuries.”
“Really?”
“Yeah, I swear on boss’s coffee. And he is a marine.”
“You’re funny.”
“I try. Now princess I have to ask you a question and it may change the course of your life.”
“What is it?”
“What is your favourite food? Mine is chocolate.”
“Hershey bars,” Sandy answers me with a small giggle.
“I’ve never tried a Hershey bar,” I whisper to her like I’m telling her the biggest secret in the world.
“Really. A little bit. Can I have some water?” Sandy answers Ducky’s whispered question from across the room.
“You have to teach me that. That is the best trick I have ever heard,” I exclaim to Sandy making her laugh again.
“Sandy, this is really important. Can you tell us anything about the car you were driven in?” Gibbs questions her while kneeling in front of her, right next to me.
“Well, it was a man and there were no windows in back,” Sandy explains to us.
“How could you tell?” Kate questions her.
“Because I couldn’t feel the sun on my face.”
“What about the place he was keeping you and your mum?” Gibbs questions her softly.
“Anything unusual about it?” I question her.
“I don’t know. I was real scared. But I could hear him talking to my mum and she was crying and… and he kept on pulling my hair,” Sandy cries out making me gently pull her into another hug.
“Hey, it’s ok. I would be scared too,” I whisper into her eye while rubbing her back and rocking her in an attempted at calming her down.
“It’s okay, Sandy. Just tell us what you remember,” Kate tries to push her gently while Gibbs phone rings in the background.
“Yeah, Gibbs. All right. We’re on our way,” Gibbs says into his phone before turning to Sandy and adds, “Sandy, I want you to stay here with Doctor Mallard and Alice. We have to check…”
“I heard! You can see my mum on your computer now. I hear lots of things other kids can’t. Can I help you?” Sandy cuts Gibbs off.

“Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
“We’re going to play some sounds from the room that you were in, Sandy. I think it might help you remember better,” Kate informs Sandy once we get into autopsy.
“If it ever gets too much for you, you just have to say stop once and we while turn it off,” I inform Sandy softly.
“Can you just play certain Hertz if I want you to?” Sandy questions Abby.
“Sure, how did you know that?” Abby questions Sandy with a smile on her face.
“From the piano. I know the number of vibrations of every key. Like key number fort-four, E-four, that’s three hundred and twenty nine point six-three Hertz. A-five is eight hundred and eighty. My mum says I’m half bat.”
“Well, that’s cool. I love bats.”
“Me, too. I like your voice, Abby. It’s kind of gravelly.”
“Thank you. All right, are you ready to show off for us?” Abby questions her while typing away at
her computer to pull up an old video.
“Lorton Amtrak Station. You’ve got your good faith gesture. Now get back to work,” Kyle Grayson, the man who kidnapped and blackmailed the captain and his family, says on the video.
“There are birds up kind of high. Try a G-seven. The eighty-third key. That’s three thousand one hundred and thirty six Hertz,” Sandy informs us what she can hear.
That’s amazing, Sandy. I’ll be right back,” Kate exclaims when she hears the birds on the video, she walks away to talk to Gibbs so I turn to Sandy to talk to her.
“Now, Sandy, if you hear any opera music on this thing, I need you to warn me because I can’t stand that stuff,” I whisper to her making her giggle a little bit.
“Hey, Sandy. I need you to,” Gibbs says to Sandy once he has squatted down behind her and next to me again.
“Here,” Gibbs says while placing a tiny badge into her hand.
“What’s this?”
“Your very own NCIS badge. You ready?”
“And remember, if it gets too much, just say stop and we will. You are so brave,” I remind her.
“Yes,” Sandy answers both of us.
“McGee, bring the live feed up on the speakers,” Gibbs orders McGee before placing his hand on Sandy’s head and telling her, “Sandy, we need to know anything you can tell us about where he is keeping you mum.”
“When I took this job, I was instructed not to hurt you or the little princess, but your husband cost me six years!” Kyle Grayson snaps on the tape.
“Who hired you?” Jill, Sandy’s mum, questions him.
“I don’t really care. The point is I’ve decided your husband has to pay for that.”
“Why?”
“No more questions,” Kyle Grayson snaps before slapping Jill across the face making both Jill and Sandy start to cry again.
“Go to the area of A-seven. I mean four thousand Hertz. Bring it two keys down. I mean three thousand eight hundred,” Sandy stutters out bravely.
“Sounds like a train,” Tony realise when Abby gets to the correct Hertz that Sandy is trying to find.
“It’s getting closer. It’s passing right… now.”
“Seven-oh-six. What time’s the next train scheduled to arrive in Lorton?” Gibbs questions everyone.
“I’m on it, boss,” Tony calls out.
“Can you remember anything else about the train sounds?” Gibbs questions Sandy softly in a fatherly tone of voice.
“We drove over a lot of tracks. My mum… she… she squeezed my hand every time,” Sandy explained to us.
“How many times?”
“Look at me!” Kyle Grayson yells on the tape.
“I don’t know. A lot,” Sandy cries to us before calling out in fear, “What is he doing to her?! Why is she crying?”
“You did great,” Gibbs informs her while Abby turns the sound off on the computer.
“Are you going to save my mum now?”
“Oh, yea. You can count on that. Let’s roll. Alice stay with Sandy.”
“Will do. You want to get chocolate with me,” I whisper the last part to Sandy before adding, “Don’t tell Kate, she wants me to cut down on my chocolate.”
“Everything’s going to be all right now, sweetheart, everything,” Watson says to Sandy who he is holding in the squad room after a long day.
“Kind of makes you think,” Kate says to Tony while watching the family reunion.
“About what?” Tony questions her.
“Having kids someday.”
“Yeah, I don’t think I could handle that.”
“I don’t know how we could ever thank you, agent Gibbs,” Watson says to Gibbs once they walk over to the agent huddle.
“We own you so much,” Jill agrees with her husband.
“Thank special agent Watson here. We couldn’t have done it without her. Thanks,” Gibbs says while thanking Sandy making her smile.
“We did good today, Gibbs,” Kate says to Gibbs once Watson walks away.
“Did we, special agent Todd? Grayson didn’t have the smarts to be in this alone. We still have to find out who hired him.”
“Not going to get it from Grayson,” Tony states.
“Why not? Get him to roll for a deal,” Kate offers.
“I don’t deal,” Gibbs informs her.
“He doesn’t deal?”
“Not when Grayson doesn’t know who hired him.”
“This guy’s good. We lost the money for a little while in Hong Kong,” McGee explains to us the following morning.
“But McGee’s bots picked it up on the transfer to Zurich,” Abby takes over from McGee.
“And with Abby’s encryption algorithm imbedded in the transaction it’s just…”
“Look, just for a second… just pretend I don’t know anything about computers,” Gibbs cuts them off.
“Pretend?” Abby questions Gibbs with a smile.
‘Let him have his lie,’ I sign to Abby from behind Gibbs making her smile even bigger.
“Can we get this guy or not?” Gibbs questions them.
“Well, we’ve been following the money for the last eight hours. And if it transfers into a country where we have juris… wait, I don’t believe this,” McGee exclaims while looking at the computer.
“What?” Gibbs and I questions him.
“It’s headed back here.”
“Capatin Watson?” Gibbs questions Watson at the bank where the money was transferred too.
“Agent Gibbs. This is not what you think,” Watson tries to defend himself.
“You’re right. It wasn’t,” Gibbs exclaims.
“You did this to your own family?” Kate questions to him.
“You let Sandy get hurt and scared for a little bit of money,” I snapped at Watson as I lung at him but Kate holds me back.
“No, nobody was supposed to get hurt,” Watson defends himself again while Tony cuffs him tightly while I lung at him again.
“Is that tight enough for you, captain?” Toon questions him.
“I cannot believe this is happening!”
“You fake kidnap your own family and you are confused how you are being arrested,” I snap at him in anger.
“It was the perfect plan. Even Grayson didn’t know who hired him. How the hell did you figure this out?”
“Next time you might want to send you note to the FBI,” Kate offers to him.
“Look, you’ve got to understand. I needed the money because,” Watson attempts to defend himself but Gibbs throws him against a wall.
“Don’t you dare tell me that there’s a reason for you throwing away what you had,” Gibbs snaps at him.
“Your network is up and operational now. So I’ll be heading back to Norfolk,” McGee report to
Gibbs and after a moment he adds, “I’ll take that as a thank you.”
“McGee, where are you going?” Gibbs questions McGee when he goes to walk away.
“Uh… Norfolk.”
“Well, I’ve got some good news and some bad news for you. You’ve just been promoted to a full time field agent.”
“Really?! That’s incredible! What’d…”
“You belong to me now.”
“Congratulations,” Kate says with an evil smile.
“Yeah. What she said,” Tony adds onto the end with the same smile.
“Why Gibbs? Just why? Don’t we have enough idiots? We have the old one and the dumb one? Also known as boobless and brainless, and I still don’t know which is which,” I complain to Gibbs while pointing at Tony and Kate.
“So I’m one of you guys now, right? No more… no more getting coffee. Mo more hazing,” McGee question Tony and Kate while moving away from me.
“Sure,” Tony and Kate say together with even bigger evil smiles after glaring at me.
“Right. Uh… will I just wat to say uh… that I never took it personal and I really look forward to,” McGee stutters out but is cut off when Kate and Tony hit her in the back of the head, Gibbs style, and walking back to their desks.
“You know, I could really get used to that,” Tony exclaims while sitting down at his desk rights as the AC starts up again making us all sigh in relief.
“Happy 18th birthday, Alice,” Gibbs suddenly says to me.
“Thanks,” I whisper softly while blushing at the sudden attention.
“Happy birthday,” Tony and McGee add.
“Happy birthday Alice,” Abby exclaims while running into the squad room with a piece of cake, black roses and a present.
“How did you all know it was my birthday?” I question them with fake confidence.
“Gibbs.”
“Thanks,” I say when she hands me the roses and cake, “But you didn’t have to do this.”
“I know. Are you going to eat the cake or not?”
“I would, but Tony’s drooling and that’s always fun to watch.”
“I got you a present too,” Abby adds while jumping around and handing me the present once I place the cake and flowers on Gibbs’ desk.
“Thank you.” I say to her while opening the present to find a new outfit of; Abercrombie & Fitch Kenzie skirt, Shoop neck boxy tee, Carvela Kurt Geiger Sammy leather boot, 2” zipper black leather cuff wristband D ring 80s gothic punk heavy metal death, silver chain leather gothic choker collar punk elegant gothic, and a fating hippo.
https://www.polyvore.com/ncis_costume_abby/set?id=60080190
“I have one too, so know we can dress the same.”
“Thank you Abby,” I inform her while giving her a hug.
“Here you go,” Gibbs says to me while handing me a small present.
“Gibbs you didn’t have to,” I say to him with a smile while grabbing the present and opening it to find a necklace with a photo of Kate in one side and a photo of me and Gibbs in the other. “Thank you Gibbs,” I exclaim while giving him a hug and a kiss on his check in thanks. When we release each other, I asking him to put it on me.
“I forgot it was your birthday, so I didn’t get you anything,” Tony explains to me while I smack his hand when he attempts to take my cake.
“Who wants some cake?” I question everyone while cutting the piece of cake into six pieces.
“Me, me.”
“Thank you,” Abby says when I hand the cake out to everyone.
“Here you go my dear,” Ducky says to me while handing me a wrapped present.
“Thank you Ducky, sorry I don’t have any more cake for you,” I explain to Ducky while opening his gift to see a new leather jacket.
“That’s quite alright, my dear.”
“Thank you this is brilliant, I always wanted one of these.”
“Okay, everyone back to work,” Gibbs orders after a couple more minutes.
“We are having a dinner at the Chinese restaurant down the road, if you want to come. Gerald is coming,” I offer everyone before they can return to work, and adding that Gerald is coming like that while changing their minds into going.
“Sure,” Tony agrees without thought.
“When?” Abby questions me.
“Depends when Gibbs lets us go home,” I answer making Abby smile at my non-answer.
“I would love to come,” Ducky informs me before giving me a hug and leaving the squad room.
“Gibbs?” I question him but he refuses to answer me.
“Agent Gibbs?” Willis, the base security officer, calls out to us when we get to the crime scene on the base yard behind an old set of units.

“Yeah,” Gibbs answers him as I straighten my leather jacket that Ducky gave me for my birthday, over a plain white button up shirt, which is tucked into my black flare bottom jeans with the belt that Gibbs gave me and my normal combat boots. My red hear is tired back in a piggy tale that is through the hole in the back of my NCIS cap.

“Lieutenant Commander Willis, base security.”

“Commander Hutchin’s day to play golf?”

“Intestinal virus.”

“Ahh, Special Agent Todd, McGee, DiNozzo, Trainee agent Todd. How long since anyone’s lived in these units?”

“Base closed the tract five years ago. Plans were to convert it to a park. Cutbacks put it on hold. The units were becoming a security and health hazard. We brought in a private company to demo it.”

“When Gibbs introduced us, he introduced you, then McGee, then me. Why did he mention me last?” Tony complains while we get the gear out of the van.

“You are kidding,” Kate states.

“No, for Gibbs to mix up the seniority order like that… it just, you know, it just seems weird, that’s all.”

“I really don’t think it really means,” McGee tries to say but Tony cuts him off.

“Probie?”

“I wouldn’t worry about rerouting the blood in your body to think about it,” I inform Tony while grabbing Gibbs bag.

“I wouldn’t put too much stock in it,” Kate agrees with me while giving me a look.

“Why do you say that?” Tony questions us.

“Well, because I don’t think it has anything to do with seniority.”

“My guess would be level of intelligence and general competence,” Kate offers making Tony smack the back of McGee’s head.

“I don’t say anything.” McGee defends himself.

“It’s what you’re thinking, Probie.”

“Soon as we knew what we had, all work was stopped, we contained the scene,” Willis finishes telling Gibbs as we walk up to them to see that there is a hole in the ground down to an underground building with a body in it.

“Wow,” I exclaim while looking down.

“Old bunker?” Gibbs questions Willis.

“We don’t know what it is,” Willis informs us.

“Move it more left. Your other left, McGee,” Gibbs orders McGee who is controlling the camera in the underground building that we are watching.

“Sorry, boss,” McGee calls over to Gibbs while moving the camera the correct way.

“Little nervous, Probie?” Tony teases McGee.

“Whoa! Hold it right there! The tunnel leads to the house,” Gibbs suddenly calls out before heading to the house a little way away.

We all enter the house and after we make sure it is clear, we search the house. Gibbs search the living room, I am searching the bed room while Tony searches a closet off the living room that has a vent in it. The whole house looks like it just got pull-out of a 50’s photo, but everything is covered in a thick coat of dust, which is the only sign that no-one has lived or is living there.

“Boss, over here!” Tony calls making me leave the dust bedroom, to see that he has found the entry into the underground building.
“Kate, McGee, Alice, you’re with me. DiNozzo, wait for Ducky,” Gibbs hands out the assessments. “Let’s do it,” Gibbs states while we start prosing the room. McGee is photographing the crime scene with the camera while I bag and tag, meaning I am following him around like a lot puppy. Gibbs and Kate are looking around and trying to get a feel for the room and people who are involved in the crime. “Nails were hammered in at a left to right angle. Might have been left-handed,” Gibbs notes while shining his torch to the nails. “Ever seen anything like this before, boss?” McGee questions Gibbs. “Only in the movies.” “Hey Duck,” Gibbs says as Ducky walks into the bigger room in which the body is. “This is really sick. Stephen King would love it,” Tony exclaims when he gets his first look at the room. “Oh, my dear. Let’s get you out of this place… into somewhere more appropriate, I promise,” Ducky says to the victim like normal. “That was really nice, Doctor,” Palmer praises Ducky. “Thank you, Mister Palmer. Now if you’ll give me the bag for transportation.” “It’s in the,” Palmer hesitates while looking back down the narrow hallway before finishing. “Truck.” “I know. Next time you’ll remember.” “Oh.” “Idoits. Gerald was at least trained to bring it with him at all times,” I snap making Palmer jump in surprise that I even spoke. He turns and quickly walk back up the hallway, “I don’t like him. I can’t wait for Gerald to return.” “The good wife guide. Ten steps to pleasing your husband,” Kate reads off the book on the bedside table while Tony gives me a look of sadness. “I think I read something like that in Redbook,” McGee exclaims suddenly. “Redbook?” Tony questions McGee. “Yeah.” “You read Redbook?” “Yeah, all the time.” “Weill, I don’t think you read this one, McGee. It’s from May, nineteen fifty five,” Kate informs McGee. “Oh, so that last time you got laid Kate,” I state while looking around the room, and not at her death stare. “How long’s she been here, Duck?” Gibbs question Ducky. “Oh, it’s hard to say, Jethro. Poor thing’s been dead for months,” Ducky answers him. “How about years?” I questions Ducky while looking at the poor victim. “Perhaps one. Not more than two.” “Housing’s been abandoned for five years,” Gibbs informs her. “Well, then she wasn’t the last tenant.” “Check it anyway,” Gibbs orders us anyway. “The last tenant in that house was Lieutenant Commander Carlton Halpin, his wife and two children. Moved out January of ninety nine. Transferred to the San Diego Naval Station. As far as we can tell he’s never been back,” Kate reports what we have found since we returned to the squad room. “McGee?” Gibbs asks while turning from Kate’s desk to McGee’s desk while playing with a stress ball. “All the materials used in the construction of the bunker could have been purchased at any Lowe’s in the area,” McGee reports without stuttering for once. “DiNozzo?” Gibbs question Tony while turning from one desk to the other again. “A lot of the furniture in the room is authentic Fifties. Not my taste, but what the hell,” Tony reports
but gets of topic. Gibbs gives him a look making him get back on topic and look that smile while adding, “All from various manufacturers. Nothing in production today. The way I figure it, he would have had to collect the pieces from antique shops or garage sales.”

“Or they were handing down in the family,” I offer from my spot at Gibbs desk.

“Yeah, I was getting to that. There is, of course, always the possibility that the pieces had been handed down from family members. The point is either scenario is not a road that is easily traceable,” Tony explains but when Gibbs gives him a look that says ‘do it anyway,’ Tony turns to McGee and asks him, “Question for you, Probie. Redbook. Why?”

“Redbook was and still is the definitive magazine for today’s young woman,” McGee explains to the best of his ability.

“You planning a sex change?” Tony and I question McGee together.

“No. since I’ve always been interested in women, I figured the best way to know about them was to, you know, know about them.”

“McGee, the best way to know about them is to know them.”

“McGee, women know and understand other women and we can’t stand each other. We might be nice in front of the person but we while ripe you to shreds behind your back. Is that what you want to know, really?” I question McGee.

“What do you have, Abby?” Gibbs questions Abby while walking into the lab and turning down the music.

“What don’t I have, Gibbs? Clothing fibres, carpet fibres, dust, beetle parts, soiled bedding. There’s even a pamphlet called ‘the good wife guide.’ What’s up with that?” Abby questions us while holding up said pamphlet.

“Ask McGee,” I inform her.

“McGee?”

“McGee,” Gibbs agrees with her.

“Really.”

“The dress, Abby,” I question her.

“As you might imagine, it’s not exactly virginal. It was made in nineteen fifty-two. She’d been wearing it for months before she died. And I’m running a DNA sample as we…”

“Prints?” Gibbs cuts her off.

“All over the room! Thanks to our semi-mummy, I was able to get a match for our victim. Your crack team is running them A-FIS.”

“Only the prints of the victim?” I question her in confusion.

“Yeah I’m afraid so. I found trace of cleanser on the furniture.”

“He’s cautious,” Gibbs states.

“So am I when I chain guys up.”

“Only when they don’t want to be chained up,” I state making her grin at me.

“Victim is Carolyn Figgis. Petty officer third class, twenty two. Went missing eighteen months ago,” Kate reports to us once we return to the squad room.

“I pulled the file, boss. It was Pacci case. Didn’t have much. She left for work one morning and poof! Gone! No witnesses. Case went cold,” Tony adds to the report.

“Yeah, well it just got hot again,” Gibbs comments.

“Ducky estimates she’s been dead about a year. That means she was in the bunker for six months before she died,” McGee adds when no one spoke after Gibbs comment.

“That rules out the last tenants,” Tony remarks.

“Kate? Tell me about our killer,” Gibbs orders her.

“The basic pathology is obvious. He was probably abused as a child. Dad beating on mum. One or both beating on him. Who knows?” Kate profiles the killer while sitting on the edge of her desk.

“He’s trying to create the perfect relationship,” McGee states.

“That’s right. Control is the name of the game.”
“This one didn’t live up to his expectations,” Tony comments.

“Why was I sure you’d understand that part?”

“So he cut her air supply, left you to die in an airtight chamber, and just what moved on?” I question her.

“Yeah, that’s the problem. This kind of pathology is driven. He’s not going to stop until he finds the perfect one.”

“He’s playing house with somebody else out there,” Gibbs says what we are all thinking.

“Something’s off,” Gibbs comments when he looks at Kate’s recreated room in the NCIS garage.

“Gibs, I recreated it from McGee’s photos. Gibbs, everything in here was A-L-S’d. All pertinent forensic evidence was sent to Abby for analysis, and then I rebuilt it from the photos,” Kate defends herself while Gibbs looks around the room for what is out of place. After a moment Kate adds, “This room and everything in it is exactly as it was when we found it.”

“What is with his fifties thing?” I question Kate as Gibbs moves a lamp slightly of centre on the night stand while Kate sighs at him for doing that.

“The fifties represent an idealized time when the rules between men and women were simpler.”

“This was an older guy,” Gibbs states what we think she was telling us.

“Actually, I think he was younger. As Tony said, a lot of the stuff in here is authentic Fifties, but a lot of it isn’t. Some is sixties. Some are reproductions. But it isn’t pure.”

“He couldn’t get his hands on the real deal,” I state.

“I don’t think it mattered. I think he put this room together based on his idea of a fantasy, rather than some remembrance of an ideal experience.”

“Someone who grew up with it would be more pure?” Gibbs questions her.

“Well, I think he’d want be as close to what he actually experienced as possible. Plus he didn’t seem to have a problem with just picking up and leaving everything behind.”

“How do we know that he left of his own free will?” I question her what has been nagging at me.

“Transferred. It’s possible.”

“Ducky said her wedding ring was removed,” Gibbs states.

“Well, it makes sense that would be the one thing that he keeps in common from one bride to the next. You know, it might help if I could observe a re-enactment of the victim’s life inside the chamber.”

Put someone in a wedding dress.”

“Tony would look cute.”

“Nope. Off interviewing the victim’s parents.”

“Well, McGee’s then.”

“No. McGee’s with Tony.”

“Abby?”

“No, up to her tats in forensics tests.”

“Alice?”

“The last time you got me into a dress, I was what five, and you needed twelve stitches,” I remind her.

“Well what about you?” Kate quickly turns to Gibbs while rubbing the back of her head but when he just sticks his head back into the room because he has walked out and give her his ‘you better be joking,’ look she quickly adds, “You won’t have to wear the dress.”

“This is not what I had in mind, Gibbs,” Kate complains when Gibbs chained her to the wall in the recreated room.

“You wanted a re-enactment. Re-enact.”

“I wanted to observe.”

“We’re observing,” I inform her while Gibbs and I lean against the wall.

“Okay. She can make it to the toilet, but she couldn’t make it to the threshold of the tunnel,” Kate explains while testing everything she is doing. “I can’t imagine what she must have gone through, Gibbs. How many months did she suffer before giving up and realizing she was never going to be
found, that no one was ever going to hear her screams. She had nothing left to do but sit and stare at her own reflection,” Kate continues while staring at her own image in the old mirror.

“What?”

“The rug. The spots.”

“Someone was standing there over and over again.”

“Mm-mm.”

“The pattern’s wrong. It’s not from a shoe or foot. It’s too round – too large. She wasn’t standing. She was kneeling,” I correct them.

“Enough to permanently wear an indentation in the carpet.”

“Praying,” We all release together.

Polopinus Ingens. Commonly known as the Darkling Beetle. As with all beetles, the Darkling has two sets of wings. One set of hard front wings and a set of soft hind wings used for flying,” Abby explains what she has found so far once we return to the lab.

“This is going to be useful, Abby, why?” Gibbs questions her.

“Gibbs, I know you know that I need a good windup before I deliver my knock-out.”

“Just hit me with it, baby.”

“Okay, this particular species of Darkling is indigenous only in extreme Southeast Georgia and northeast Florida.”

“What’s it doing in Virginia?” I question her in confusion.

“My guess? Somebody steeped on it. A piece of it got lodged in the shoe, and then it dislodged in mister sicko’s love nest. Very ‘silence of the lambs,’ don’t you think?”

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“Our nasty critter could have called any one of three Navy bases home; Jacksonville Naval Air Station, or May-port Naval Station in Florida, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, in Georgia,” Tony reports.

“We have a piece of a beetle that shouldn’t be in Virginia,” Kate states.

“We also have a victim who should have lived a long life,” I cut Kate off while reminding her about the young lady’s missing life.

“It doesn’t mean that the guy who did this is there now,” Kate continues while ignoring me.

“Didn’t say it did,” Gibbs states while shushing me.

“Well. She’s right, boss. I mean, he could’ve just been there on vacation, who knows,” McGee adds into the conversation.

“Could’ve been.”

“He still could be here,” Tony declares.

“Except nobody else is missing from Norfolk. Somebody is from Jacksonville. She fits the profile. NCIS agent Jane Melankovic forwarded a missing person’s report she filed on a female Petty Officer, Barbara Swain, Petty Officer Second Class at Jacksonville. She’s been missing for almost four months,” McGee shows Tony up.

“She’s close in age to Carolyn Figgis, similar look,” Kate agrees with McGee when he puts the photo on the plasma screen.

“Same deal, too. Disappeared off the face of the earth. Never made it to work. No witnesses. No clues. Case went dead.”

“Get us on the next flight to Jacksonville, and tell Agent Melankovic we think her victim might still be alive on base,” Gibbs orders them.

“On it, boss,” Tony answers while getting to work.

“Pretty thin, Gibbs,” Kate states.

“Have you go anything else? No, well I guess this is all we have,” I remind her the cold hard truth of this case.

“The Seahawk is still searching for thermal anomalies,” Melankovic reports to us when we arrive at
the Naval base and leading us into the NCIS Comm room while continuing to explain, “on the
ground surface.”
“We’ve been sweeping for a long time, Agent Melankovic,” Tony comments as he sits at
Melankovic desk and plays with her peanuts.
“At this altitude, they’re working a hundred and fifty foot swatches. It’s time consuming, but more
accurate.”
“Hungry again, Tony?” Kate questions him.
“Actually, no, Kate. I… I’m just bored. I had something to eat on the plane. I’m not sure what I ate,
but it was filling.” Tony informs her.
“You had the chicken Singapore with port mushroom sauce,” McGee informs Tony.
“Something you read in Redbook, McGee?”
“Ladies Home Journal, actually.”
“The food and home section?” Melankovic inquires of McGee.
“Yeah, that’s right.
“The best.”
“Oh, no question.”
“McGee, right?”
“Timothy.”
“Jane.”
“Me, Tony,” Tony cuts in.
“I’m going to be sick,” I comment while pulling a face.
“Oh, look like they’re picking up a thermal signature. It’s warm. Warm is good,” Melankovic points
out when the computer shows a heat signature.
“Petty Officer Third Class Darrel Baum,” Tony reports to Gibbs in the garage where the heat
signature was coming from.
“Works in Avionics,” McGee adds.
“Claims he was growing it for his own personal use,” Tony continues talking about the dope trees
that are growing in the garage.
“What do you think?” Gibbs questions them.
“Well, there’s over two hundred plants, boss. Got to think he’s spreading the love, and I’m pretty
sure Darrel’s cutting into his profit margin.”
“There’s nothing here,” I sadly inform everyone while looking around one of our last leads.
“Don’t look like it. Says he started over three months age. Size of the weeds indicates that would be
about right.”
“And you know this because?” Kate questions him.
“Of my experience with the Baltimore P.D drug task force.”
“You were never on the Baltimore P.D drug task force,” Gibbs reminds him.
“Which you never worked on,” I overlaps Gibbs.
“I have friends. We shared experiences,” Tony tries.
“You don’t have any friends.”
“Actually, Darrel does seem to be on the level, boss,” McGee cuts in.
“Oh, and you know this why, McGee? From personal knowledge?” Gibbs inquires of them.
“No, no, no, no. I mean, you know, there was occasional innocent youth, you know, experience, of
course.”
“Commander Spencer would like to see you, sir,” an M.P. overlaps McGee.
“Let me guess, you never inhaled,” Tony teases McGee.
“I inhaled,” McGee defended himself.
“Yeah?”
“Yeah. Once, a little bit.”
“How was it?”
“Didn’t like it.”
“You didn’t like it?” Kate questions McGee in surprise.
“No.
“He didn’t inhale,” Kate and Tony state in unison.
“All four hundred twenty three houses have been analysed, agent Gibbs. No heat signatures other than this one have been recorded. Okay with you if I recall the helo?” Spencer questions Gibbs but walks away before Gibbs can think about answering him.
“What now, Gibbs?” Kate questions Gibbs.
“Well, I guess we just give up, agent Todd,” Gibbs answers her sarcastically.

Shot the forensics wad on our mummified bride. Except for the prints, nothing in the underground chamber is really speaking to me. The carpet fibre indicates a cheap nylon product available anywhere. Analysis of the accumulated dust only indicates that our sicko murderer wasn’t any better a housekeeper then he was a pretend husband,” Abby explains to us through a video call on Melankovic.

“The clothes fibre,” Gibbs questions her.
“White cotton, probably socks. And purple silk. Don’t know what that’s about. Maybe a scarf or an ascot kind of thing.”

“How many guys wear ascites today?” Kate questions everyone.
“I have,” Tony answers her while eating some nuts he found.
“She said men,” I remind him.
“You would,” Kate states.

“Okay, thanks, Abs,” Gibbs says to her.
“Oh, anything for you, oh wonderful wizard. By the way, Tony?” Abby calls over to the pest, I mean Tony.

“Yeah?” Tony asks her.
“I need it back when you’re done,” Abby informs him before ending the call.
“Files you requested. All the transfers from Norfolk over the past six months,” Melankovic informs us while trying to handing Gibbs the files.

“Put them over there, agent Melankovic,” Gibbs orders her.
“Hey, we appreciate the use of your desk,” I politely say to her.
“Not a problem. Finding everything all right?” Melankovic questions us.

“Yeah, DiNozzo there sure found the nuts without much trouble,” Gibbs says while nodding to Tony.
“I haven’t eaten since the plane. I hope you don’t mind,” Tony defends himself around a mouthful of nuts.
“I do, actually. They’re for my sister,” Melankovic informs him.
“Oh, I’m sorry. But probably for the best. So fattening. I’m sure you know that from all your food magazine reading.”

“She’s anorexic,” Melankovic snaps making Tony slowly return his handful of nuts to the bottle and putting the lid back onto it.

“According to the missing person’s report, the last person to see Petty Officer Swain was her roommate,” Gibbs cuts in before Melankovic murders Tony.

“That’s right. Petty officer Debra Marshall.”

“Is she still on base?” I question her.

“Mechanic in Motor-T.”

“Alright, Kate, Alice, you’re with me. DiNozzo, you’re with McGee,” Gibbs orders us.

“McGee, yeah,” Tony says sarcastically.

“Help her with the transfers,” Gibbs orders Tony while pointing to Melankovic

“Agent Gibbs, I did the initial interview with the roommate,” Melankovic reminds Gibbs.

“Yeah. We know,” I state.

Petty Officer Marshall?” Kate question the roommate when we arrive at the motor pool.
“Yeah?” Marshall turns to us to answer.
“NCIS.”
“Is it about Barbara, ma’am?”
“Yes.”
“Have they found her?”
“No.”
“You don’t expect her to be found alive?” Gibbs questions her in surprise.
“I was told odds get worse the longer a person goes missing, sir,” Marshall answers him.
“Well, yeah. That’s true.”
“Agent Melankovic might have gone over this ground with you before, but,” Kate says to Marshall.
“No problem, ma’am,” Marshall cuts her off.
“You last saw your roommate when she left for work four months ago?” I question her.
“It was zero six hundred, ma’am. She worked her in Admin. That’s how we met.”
“Was there anyone acting strange around her? Any arguments or disputes you might know about?” Kate inquires of her next.
“No, ma’am. Everyone liked Barbara.”
“Even likeable people have beefs. So I’m told,” Gibbs states.
“Was there anything particular on her mind at the time?” Kate questions Marshall.
“No, ma’am. Everyone liked Barbara.”
“Guys?”
“She was hang up that she couldn’t find the right one.”
“She wanted to get married?” I question her.
“In the worst way, sir. Except all the guys she met were losers. She thought something must be wrong with her. Even mentioned she might even see somebody about it.”
“Did she?” Kate questions her.
“I don’t know. She was a really private person.”
“Did you ever meet any of the losers?” Gibbs demands of her.
“No, sir. I couldn’t even tell you their names. I doubt Barbara could either.”
“Just because she didn’t see a Navy therapist doesn’t mean she wasn’t seeing someone off base,” Kate theories after we talked to the hospital staff.
“She’s a petty officer. Civilian shrinks are expensive,” Gibbs remind her.
“Private people go to lone lengths sometimes.”
“Sometimes. Sometimes they don’t have to.”
“Bit’s in your mouth, Gibbs.”
“She didn’t have to see a shrink.”
“Oh, okay.”
“Second divorce. I saw the Padre.”
“Chaplains don’t keep records.”
“Oh, okay. I can’t keep my mouth shut. Why did you keep getting married? Do you have a thing for getting hurt?” I question Gibbs but he failed to answer me like normal.
“Yes, I saw her. Only once, though,” Evans, the padre, informs us when we get to the chapel.
“We know that whatever you discuss is confidential, but her life could hang in the balance,” Kate informs him.
“What happened to the woman at Norfolk could be happening to her,” Gibbs adds.
“Petty office Swain didn’t say much. In fact, I did most of the talking,” Evans informs us.
“What were her issues?” Kate questions her.
“She was attracted to men who fulfilled her needs on a physical level but not a spiritual one. And I tried to make her see they didn’t need to be mutually exclusive. A difficult concept in today’s world.”
“Did she mention any of those men by name?” I question him.
“No, she met them in bars. I got the impression they weren’t around very long. She was supposed to
call and make another appointment. Never did.”

“Are you sure about this, DiNozzo?” Gibbs questions Tony after they canvased the bars around there. “From where? Silk? Or purple!” Gibbs exclaims before hanging up the phone and turning around the car to head back to the church.

“It wasn’t petty officer Carolyn Figgis who was praying, was it?” Kate questions Gibbs while holding up.

“Nope.

Gibbs brings the car to a stop in front of the church and we all get out. We run into the church to see Evan in the pews and when he sees us, he turns and kills himself.

“After your interview he must have sensed that it was just a matter of time,” Spencer says to us once we have called in the suicide.

“What do you know about him, commander?” I questions him.

“Not much. He was episcopal. I’m catholic. Only time I ever met him was at the Navy Ball. He seemed normal to me.”


“The medical examiner’s on the way. I’ll get the search helo back in here.”

“I wonder what Ducky would say to this piece of work,” Kate says when Spencer walks away.

“He’d ask Evans where he’s keeping Petty Officer Swain,” I state.

“So some of these prints were enlarge d from the negatives. I think you’ll find this one very interesting. Okay, this is Petty Officer Swain’s photo from the album. Now look at the full negative. There’s much more visible in the background now around the bed, and there’s some sort of door to the left,” Abby informs us while showing us the photo’s Tony and McGee found of different victims.

“Abs, can you blow that up?” Gibbs questions her.

“And lighten it?” I add once she blow it up but I can’t see anything.

“Oh, yeah!” Abby informs us while doing it, “It’s a riveted door frame.”

“That’s an ammo bunker,” Gibbs says.

“You’re right, Gibbs. These ammo bunkers are the only underground structures on the base with riveted doors,” Spencer says to us when we get to the ammo bunkers on base.

“How many?” Gibbs questions her.

“Six bunkers, all with multiple corridors and up to a hundred compartments each. Some units have bar locks, other padlocks. They’ve been vacated so long, I couldn’t get access to a master key.”

“We’ll need bolt cutters,” I state.

“You got them. The search dogs won’t be here for another half hour.”

“Can’t wait. Kate, McGee, DiNozzo, take bunker two. Thanks. Melankovic, Alice, you’re with me,” Gibbs orders while taking the bolt cutter that was being handed to him.

“‘We’ll take bunker three,” Kate states while we all split up going to our bunkers to look for the victim.

“Bunker one is clear. What’s everyone’s status?” Gibbs calls over the radio.

“McGee and I almost done, too,” Kate answers him.

“I got a couple more, boss,” Tony answers Gibbs.

“Keep me posted,” Gibbs orders him.

“Boss, DiNozzo. I got her. Bunker two, corridor C. she’s all right but,” Tony whispers through his phone but gets cut off with a smashing sound in the background.

“DiNozzo! Tony! Tony are you there?” Gibbs calls into the phone but when he gets no answer, we all run to the bunker and search for it.

“Kate,” I calls out to her.

“Is it true? Brett’s dead?” Swain questions us while pointing a gun at her own head.

“Put the gun down, petty officer,” Gibbs orders her.
“We were supposed to get married. I don’t think I can go on without him.”
“Kate?” I call out again.
“You’ve done everything that Brett’s asked, haven’t you?” Kate questions Swain.
“I have,” Swain agrees.
“You wouldn’t want to disappoint him, would you?”
“No.”
“Doesn’t the guide say that the good wife must carry on in her husband’s absence? Let me show you,” Kate says to her and Swain lets her walk into the room but instead of going to the book, Kate rushes Swain and pulls the gun out of her hand.
“How’s your head?” McGee questions Tony the following day after we returned to the squad room at NCIS.
“Still throbbing. You know what bongos are?” Tony inquires of McGee.
“Yeah.”
“Well a Beatnik is playing them in my head.”
“You finally met the perfect fifties woman and she almost kills you, DiNozzo,” Kate teases him.
“She was so obedient.”
“Yes. Scary how impressed you are by that.”
“I find it hard to believe how Chaplain Evans could have such power over her,” McGee states.
“Classic Stockholm Syndrome. She formed an emotional attachment to her captor. It’ll take her time, but she’ll recover,” Kate explains.
“Yeah, and Kate is talking from personal experience,” I add onto Kate making her glare at me again.
“DiNozzo, Kate, McGee, Alice. M-TAC now!” Gibbs orders while walking through the squad room and up the stairs to M-TAC.
“DiNozzo, Kate, McGee, Alice. DiNozzo, Kate, McGee, Alice!” Tony happily exclaims while getting up and following Gibbs.
“Beatnik gone?” Kate questions Tony.
“Yeah.”
“Cool,” Kate exclaims while I click my fingers and Kate joins in.
“Most people tend to their personal hygiene at home,” Kate complains to Tony when we walked into the squad room to see him brushing his teeth at his desk.

“This bothers you?” Tony questions her without caring.

“No, what bothers me is that it doesn’t bother me anymore,” Kate states while moving over to her desk and putting her stuff down.

“I’m an acquired taste.”

“Actually it’s more like the Stockholm syndrome. The emotional attachment to a captor formed by a hostage, as a result of continuous stress and a need to cooperate for survival,” McGee takes a cheap shot at Tony.

“I thought Kate was the acquired taste here,” I think out loud.

“Nice shot,” Tony comments to us both.

“Get the truck,” Gibbs orders while walking to his desk where I have just sat down.

“Where we going, boss?”

“Smoky Corners, West Virginia. A marine helo was found abandoned. Crew’s missing,” Gibbs informs us while signing to me, ‘I don’t know. But at least it’s not just me who has noticed it.’

“Any leads?” Kate questions Gibbs making me groan in frustration.

“You two do know, if you didn’t waste time asking questions, you could see for yourself when we get there,” I snap at them.

“You tell me… it’s sitting in the middle of a crop circle,” Gibbs answers them while nodding to me.

“Abby’s going to make us crazy,” McGee comments.

“Come on, let’s go!” Gibbs orders while grabbing his bag, gun and badge before walking away leaving us to follow him.

“I don’t believe it,” Tony states when we arrived at the crime scene to see that it is crawling with men looking for the missing marines.

“They never make it easy,” Kate complains.


“Gibbs, NCIS. Colonel, your people have contaminated the scene,” Gibbs snaps at the idiot.

“I’m missing two men, Gibbs. I wasn’t going to sit on my ass and wait for NCIS to drive out from Washington.”

“Yeah, well we’re going to have to take elimination prints from all your people, meaning it’ll take twice as long to do our job,” I snap at the idiot while watching the men tread all over everything.

“Stand down, man! Let NCIS do their job,” Teague shouts over to his men.

“Any damage to the aircraft?” Gibbs questions Teague.

“No, the engine checks out. Hydraulic and avionics gear are operative, fuel load’s at sixty percent.”

“When was your last contact with the crew?” I question him.

“They took off from New River at twenty-three hundred on a routine night proficiency flight. Were cleared to a practice area over Chesapeake Bay. Flight controller lost the transponder signal ten minutes out. Tries to make radio contact. Never got a response. I was notified a half hour later.”

“How’d you find it?” Gibbs inquires of him.

“We were organizing to launch a search and rescue mission when I got a call from the local sheriff. The farmer that owns this field discovered it just after sunrise.”

“DiNozzo!” Gibbs calls over to the man-child.

“Yeah, boss,” Tony calls back.

“Sketch and shoot. Kate, the cockpit. Trace evidence, bag and tag. McGee, the field. Lay out grid.”
“Got it,” Kate calls out to Gibbs while they walk off to do their jobs.
“We just started the air search. Hopefully we’ll find them. I’m ignoring the fact that my aircraft is in
the middle of a crop circle… what about you, agent Gibbs? What are your thoughts?” Teague
questions Gibbs.
“Do I think your men were abducted by aliens, colonel?” I questions Teague.
“No, I don’t. But I’m not going to ignore anything. I need an overhead view of the field,” Gibbs
answers Teague while Teague ignores me.
“Already took digital photos. Sergeant Ramos!” Teague calls out to one of his men.
“Sir,” Ramos calls out to Teague.
“Camera!”
“Who are the missing men?” I question him.
“Pilot is Captain Todd Newell. Co-pilot is Captain Patrick Barnett. Good marines. But they’re young
pilots… hot shots. The two are close. They share an apartment off base.”
“I’ll need their officer qualification records and NATOPS jackets,” Gibbs orders before yelling out,
“McGee!”
“Yeah, boss?” McGee answers him.
“Shots of the crop circle. Email them to Abby.”
“Abby? Are you certain you want to do that? You know she’s obsessed with the paranormal and…
right. I’m on it.”
“I do not want UFO freaks crawling around here, colonel. Let’s keep a lid on this. No releases to the
media.”
“Agreed,” Teague states.
“I’m always up before the sun. It’s only thirty acres, but it’s a lot of work,” Clay, the farmer and
person who found the plane, informs us.
“You didn’t hear anything last night?” Gibbs questions him.
“How long do you think it’s going to be before they get that thing out of here? I’ve got
work to do?”
“What do you think happened to your field?” I question him softly.
“You’re asking me? Ask the air force. This ain’t the first crop circle here.”
“We had one in nineteen ninety four. The air force investigated, but we never did get no answers.
There was lights back then, too,” Thompson, the sheriff, informs us.
“Lights?” Gibbs questions them.
“Lit up the sky last night.”
“Woke me up. It wasn’t lightning… there was no thunder. Like I told you, I didn’t hear anything.
Just… I tried to put it out of my mind… until I discovered this,” Clay explains to us.
“We may have more questions for you, Mister Clay,” I explain to him politely.
“I ain’t going nowhere.”
“Well, I guess I should ask around and see if anybody else seen something,” Thompson input into
the conversation.
“How long you been sheriff?” Gibbs questions Thompson.
“Couple years now.”
“You run the grain and feed store.”
“The replacement crew’s ready to fly the Cobra back to new river,” Teague informs us while walks
over to us.
“Go Ahead. We’ve got everything we need,” Gibbs informs him.
“You’re clear to go,” Teague calls out to his men.
“Do you really need all this stuff?” Tony questions McGee who is carrying two arms full of stuff.
“I’m only following instructions. Ask Abby,” McGee defends himself.
“All right. McGee, Alice and I will take the truck back. You two check out the pilots’ apartment,”
Gibbs orders us.
“Right. I’ll try not to be too familiar, Ms Todd.” Tony says to Kate making me laugh at that very
thought.
“Hey, get the scent articles for the search dogs.”
“Okay.”
“What is it, boss?” McGee questions Gibbs when he noticed Gibbs is looking around in confusion.
“I was worried about keeping a lid on this… where are the gawkers? Do you see any locals other
than the farmer who owns this field and the sheriff?”
“Special agent Gibbs? The Huey spotted a burnt-out area just north of here. You might want to come
with us,” Teague calls out to us.

“Do you think this has something to do with my crew?” Teague question us when we get to the
burnout field.
“I don’t know,” Gibbs answers him.
“But we’re going to find out,” I finish what Gibbs is thinking.
“We’ve got another scene to process.”

“I understand you’re not cooperating, Captain Barnett,” Gibbs questions one of the missing marines
who were missing that Tony and Kate found in the apartment, I am watching from the observation
room while Gibbs is in interrogation.
“I don’t know.”
“You were scheduled for a proficiency flight at twenty three hundred last night. Did you take it?”
“What’s the flight schedule say, sir?”
“Well, it days right here Newell and you took off from New River.”
“Then we did.”
“Here’s how it works, ace. I ask the question, you give direct answers,” Gibbs orders him before
almost yelling, “Did you take the flight?”
“I think Gibbs enjoys this more than sex,” Tony comments.
“That would explain the three wives,” Kate agrees with him.
“Why does everything with you two end back at sex and wives? Are you two getting married?
Because I have a great speech for it,” I question them.
“Your Cobra was found abandoned a hundred and fifty miles from where it was supposed to be and
Newell is missing,” Gibbs snaps at the lying marine before whispering to Barnett.
“What is Gibbs doing?” Kate asks in confusion.
“T-B-I,” Tony answers her.
“Excuse me?”
“Truth by intimidation. In five, four, three, two, one,” I answer her before counting in the marine.
“We were leaving for the base when Todd got a call on his cell,” Barnett explains quickly.
“You got a call, Todd? You a dude?” I question Kate making her hit me in the arm.
“He took it into the bedroom. When he came out he was messed up. He said he wasn’t feeling well
and wanted to call the Squadron Duty Officer in Ops to cancel the hop,” Barnett continues to explain
to Gibbs.
“Who made the call?” Gibbs questions him.
“I don’t know.”
“I don’t believe you, Barnett. You lived together, you fly together, you fight together. You share
everything.”
“I thought we did. Look, I rode his ass to figure out what was going on, but Todd – he got really
pissed. He told me to lay low for the rest of the night. He didn’t want me getting in trouble.”
“And you let it go at that?”
“Todd said he’s explain when he got back.”
“I believe him. What did Gibbs whisper in his ear?” Kate questions Tony.
“If I knew I’d be Gibbs. I’m going to go pull Captain Newell’s cell records,” Tony says while walking off to do what he said.

“Operation Duty Officer at New River said that Captain Newell signed the log. When I pressed, he admitted that he never really saw Captain Barnett. He just assumed that he was on the flight line, pre-flighting,” Kate reports to Gibbs back in the squad room.

“So Newell took off alone?” Gibbs questions her.
“Can you fly a Cobra by yourself?” Tony questions everyone.
“Oh, yes.”
“Yeah, I’m still here,” Tony says into his phone.
“Anything unusual in Newell’s O-Q-R or his NATOPS jacket?”
“He’s an only child. Grew up in Florida, just outside Orlando,” Kate updates Gibbs on what she knows.

“Any connection to West Virginia?” I question her.
“No. his parents died in an auto accident two years ago. His father sold insurance, and mother was an accountant at Disney World.”
“Yeah, Gibbs. Well, you can see Barnett anything you’d like, colonel,” Gibbs answers his phone and then hangs up after a moment.
“Teague?” Tony questions him.
“Good C.O.”

“Newell went through NCROTC at the University of Florida before flight school. His impulsiveness has gotten him in some trouble. A fight cost him a non-punitive letter of caution,” Kate continues to explains to us.

“That great,” Tony says into his phone before add to Gibbs, “Last call Captain Newell got on his cell was at twenty one thirty last night. He hasn’t made or received a call since. His phone is currently off.”

“Where was the call from?” Gibbs questions him.
“A pay phone in Smoky Corners, West Virginia.”

“According to the phone company, this thing hardly ever gets used,” Kate informs us when we returned to the small town.

“Well, I guess even people out here have cell phones,” Gibbs comments while looking around.
“We’re being watched. Kate put your shirt back on, we don’t what to blind them,” I comment making Kate hit me again because she has her shirt on.

“Mm-hmmm. I see.”

“Find anything?” I question Kate who is processing the phone.
“It’s clean. Too clean. Not even a smudge,” Kate states.

“Yeah, looks like the only thing out here that has been cleaned recently. Let me have a whack at it,” Gibbs says making her get out while he get into the phone box and pulling out his knife. He sticks his knives into the bottom of the phone and pulled out the coinage that was used to make the call.

“Kate, get those to Abby for prints.”

“What are you doing to the phone?” Ritt, the shop behind the phone own, questions us snidely.

“Special Agent Gibbs. NCIS. Who are you?” Gibbs fails to answer the question.

“Ritt Everett. This is my store.”

“See anyone using the phone Tuesday night?”

“Well… nope. Does this have anything to do about that helicopter and the crop circle?”

“Hello, sheriff,” Gibbs says when the sheriff walks over of the shop.

“Special Agent Gibbs. Any luck?” Thompson questions us.

“Well, sir, luck doesn’t have that much to do with it.”
“I’ve been asking around. Lot of folks seen them lights and are complainin’ their animals are acting out of sorts.”

“How?” I question them in confusion.

“Chickens stopped laying eggs. The cows ain’t producing, and stuff like that.”

“Did either of you two see him around?” Gibbs questions them while showing them a photo.

“No.”

“He’s name’s Newell. Captain Todd Newell.”

“No, I’m sorry. Ain’t seen him,” Ritt states.


“Was he the one flying that helicopter?” Ritt questions us as a phone rings.


“Who’s that?” Gibbs questions Kate who was talking to a local girl.

“Station owner’s daughter. Daphne. I think she wanted to talk… couldn’t. Her father’s having lunch with his buddies at the V-F-W in Potterville around noon. She’ll be alone,” Kate explains to us.

“We know the fire was arson and started around the same time Newell and his helo disappeared. Abby is pretty certain someone was in the cabin.” Tony states when we return to the woods.

“But we didn’t find any remains. Maybe they got out,” Gibbs states.

“Or someone removed the body,” Tony and I say in unison.

“Well, until we find remains, I’m not going to connect the dots. It’s time to get cadaver dogs up here to aid the search.”

“Cadaver dogs coming up,” Tony says.

“This your cabin, Mister Clay?”

“No. no. my land stops right over there at the tree line there,” Clay answers him.

“Who’s it belong to?” I question him.

“Well, nobody really. It went to the county after Monroe died.”

“How did Monroe die?” I probe him.

“Hunting… accident. Shack’s been abandoned ever since. I ain’t sorry it burned, though. Kids were always using the place… causing trouble,” Clay explains and after a beat he adds, “Is something wrong?” Gibbs, Tony and I walk away leaving McGee talking to him for a moment.

“What’s McGee doing out there?” Kate questions us when she sees McGee scanning the crop circle with something like a metal detector.

“Scanning the field with a magnetometer,” Tony answers her.

“Let me guess, Abby?”

“Her every wish is his command.”

“She promised to show him her new tattoo. Wait ‘till he finds out it’s on her ankle,” I inform him.

“What did ‘gas station girl’ tell you?”

“She was a no-show. Mm, it looks like he found something,” Kate says while drinking her water and watching McGee uncover an alien mask with a magnet under it. “You are suck a child.”

“Come one. I’m just taking a sip,” Tony says to Kate after stealing her drink, as Gibbs brings the car to a fast stop behind us.

“It’s yours.”

“Hey, boss. Abby needs to talk to you.”

“Abs, did you get any sleep,” Gibbs questions Abby on the monitor.

“I am overworked and not paid enough,” Abby answers him on the monitor.

“Quit,” I call over Gibbs shoulder.

“What do you got?” Gibbs questions her.
“Two partial prints on the coins from the phone booth,” Abby answers him.

“How’s the match?”

“Need to send a thank you to the West Virginia DMV. They got right index prints from two licensed drivers. One was a trucker that delivered gasoline to the station. The second was a local. Greg Sikes.”

“Oh, yeah,” Tony exclaims.

“Were you able to get any DNA off the doorknob, Abs?” Gibbs cuts in.

“Nice work on these prints, Abs. Thank you. I know you haven’t had a break in two days. Oh, that’s okay. I don’t need much sleep. Anything for the team,” Abby says while failing to answer Gibbs question.

“I assume you’ll let me know if you find something.”

“Don’t I always?”

“Yeah, Abby. You do.”

“Thank you.”

“Agent Gibbs, the cadaver dogs have found something,” Teague informs us while getting out of his car.

“Get Ducky,” Gibbs orders when we get to the wood where the victim is. He is burnt beyond recognition.

“Duck, what can you tell me?” Gibbs questions Ducky while walking into autopsy.


“Can you please give us an age range?” I softly question him.

“Mid-twenties to thirties. Oh, this distinctive fracture on the inferior left scapula is consistent with a bullet wound.”

“Cause of death?” Gibbs question him.

“Well, maybe. I mean, it could be trauma or asphyxiation. I don’t know if I’ll ever be certain. There’s not much to work with, Jethro.”

“Gibbs!” Abby calls out over the monitor again.

“Yeah?” Gibbs questions her while walking up to the monitor.

“I used non-isotopic chemiluminescent method to compare the charred DNA to Newell’s.”

“Uh-huh. And?”

“And it’s not his DNA… but it’s damn close.”

“Come on, Abs. we’re not playing horseshoes.”

“There’s a ninety-nine percent probability that the fire victim is Newell’s male sibling.”

“That can’t be,” I exclaim in confusion.

“Newell’s record of emergency data doesn’t list a brother,” Gibbs agrees with me.

“DNA doesn’t lie, Jethro. People do,” Ducky reminds him.

“The crispy critter was Captain Newell’s bother,” Abby informs us.

“His O.Q.R. was wrong?” Kate questions us in surprise herself.

“Recruits lie about things all the time. Especially their age. Why lie about having a brother? Is Abby sure?” Tony adds on.

“Yeah. She double-checked. Obviously you two didn’t,” Gibbs reminds them.

“We just assumed that his family history was right,” Kate defended them.

“NCIS agents don’t assume anything, agent Todd. They check and recheck. Verify everything independently.”

“We are on it!” Tony says.

“Orange County clerk faxed us his parents’ marriage certificate. Todd Newell was nine years old when his mother remarried. He was legally adopted; that’s how he got the Newell name. His
mother’s maiden name was Stelling, which is common in Smoky Corners,” Kate reports the real family history.

“Her first husband was a guy named Sikes. They had two boys, Greg and Todd,” Tony takes over for her.

“Todd Newell was born in Smoky Corners,” Gibbs states.

“His co-pilot, Captain Barnett, swears that he never mentioned a brother or Smoky Corners. In fact, Barnett couldn’t recall Newell ever mentioned anything about his childhood,” Kate explains.

“We need to find his biological father,” I state.

“Can’t. He died several years ago… in a hunting accident,” Tony informs us.

“Ah gee, where have I heard that one before?” Gibbs asks us sarcastically.

“So we got a dead civilian in Ducky’s cooler. Are we going to turn it over to the local authorities?”

“Nope. Not yet. I want to know more first.”

“Greg Sikes was involved with the girl at the gas station. She was the only one that seemed willing to talk. Maybe I should go back there and try to find her,” Kate explains while getting up and leaving the squad room.

“Go with her,” Gibbs orders Tony, who gets up and runs after Kate.

“All right, so we’re on the same page, right?” McGee questions Abby.

“I guess. Let me tell Gibbs,” Abby says sadly.

“Tell me what?” Gibbs asks her.

“The crop circle was a hoax created around the helicopter after it landed.”

“You don’t sound convincing, Abs.”

“Yeah, well there’s still a lot of stuff that can’t be explained.”

“Like what?” I question her.

“Balls of light in the sky. The animals acting weird. Like a missing pilot.”

“Everyone’s story is exactly the same. It’s too rehearsed. It’s what they want us to hear,” Gibbs informs her.


“What about the search dogs? I heard they were acting confused and disoriented,” Abby questions us.

“Only on the first day. The cadaver dogs had no problem finding the body this morning,” I inform her.

“I know why we haven’t been able to find Captain Newell. Thanks, guys,” Gibbs says while getting up.

“How do you know?” I question him.

“Because I’m a marine.”

Whatever Newell’s brother said to him on the phone got him upset enough to risk his entire career with an unauthorized flight in the Cobra,” Gibbs says while driving down the road while a semi-truck honks at him while he drive like hells is on his trail even night it is night.

“Boss, are you sure you don’t want me to drive for a while?” McGee questions Gibbs in fear.

“But why land in the farmer’s field?” I question everyone.

“Uh… well,” McGee says while a car honks at Gibbs driving.

“My guess, McGee, it was the closest clearing to the cabin where his brother was hiding. Only Newell was too late,” Gibbs explains his theory.

“What?” McGee says when another car honks at Gibbs bad driving.

“Focus on the case, McGee,” I snap at him.

“Sorry, uh… yes, ma’am.”

“Why the crop circle?” Gibbs question us.

“Well, I have a theory on that.”

“You going to share,” I question him when he stops talking at the next car the honks.

“Yeah, uh… okay.”

“Spit it out, McGee,” Gibbs orders.
“Okay, uh… whoever killed Greg Sikes thought that they could cover it up as another farm or hunting accident. But they couldn’t cover up an attack helicopter abandoned in a corn field.”
“Conspiracy. Make sense. It would take a lot of people to form that pattern in a few hours,” I state.
“They knew that there would be an outside investigation, so they created the circle hoping that we’d do exactly what the Air Force did ten years ago… back off and cover up what couldn’t be explained.”

Where is she?” Gibbs questions Tony when we arrive at the trailer park.

“Inside. She seemed to relate better to Kate,” Tony answers him before we walk into the trailer while Tony and McGee talks outside.

“Daphne’s father threatened to kill Greg because she’s pregnant,” Kate informs us when we arrive inside the trailer.

“Pregnant,” Gibbs overlaps her.

“Greg and me are from different corners in the valley. God, I hate this rotten place. This stupid feud,” Daphne explains to us.

“When was the last time you saw him?” I softly question her.

“At the gas station… using the pay phone to call his brother for help.”

“Was Greg close to his brother?” Gibbs asks her.

“He ain’t seen him since they was kids. About a year ago he got a call telling him their mother died. It reunited them. They’re the only family either of them had left.”

“Daphne’s afraid Captain Newell’s been drawn back into the feud,” Kate informs us.

“He’s gonna kill my daddy to get revenge.”

“Kate, you and McGee get Daphne out of here,” Gibbs orders Kate when we leave the trailer.

“What’s up, boss?” Tony questions Gibbs.

“Call off the search. Pull your men out,” Gibbs orders Teague, after ringing him, “He is. He want revenge… but he’s not going to make his move until he thinks we’re gone.”

“Who’s going on? Looks like you’re all pulling out,” Ritt says to s when we walk into his shop.

“The marines are, we aren’t. Do you get a kick out of smacking your daughter around?” Gibbs questions him.

“Why don’t you just get out of here?”

“DiNozzo, read him his rights.”

“What are you talking about?”


“Greg Sikes is dead? I thought he went hunting.”

“We found his remains.”

“You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law,” Tony resights to him.

“Aren’t you out of your jurisdiction? You’re the law here, Miller,” Ritt calls out in anger.

“Yeah, I am,” Thompson answers.

“Ah, don’t excited, sheriff. The West Virginia state police are on their way, but I do have the authority to detain both of you until they arrive,” Gibbs informs him.

“Gibbs, I have a bogey. In the trees. Closing in from the northwest,” Tony whispers to us through the radio from his spot in the barn behind the shop.

“Everybody copy?” Gibbs questions us.

“Yeah, boss,” McGee comes through the radio.

“Got it,” Kate adds.

“He slipped behind the old cars,” Tony updates us.

“Let him get closer,” Gibbs orders us.

“Oh, man. He made me.”
“Hi the lights!” I call out to everyone, making Newell gasp in pain while removing his night goggles. “NCIS. Lower your weapon, captain Newell! It’s over,” Gibbs orders him.

“It’s not over until Ritt Everett’s dead,” Newell yells at Gibbs without lowering his gun.

“He’s in the custody of the state police,” I inform him.

“That’s not going to change anything. It’s an eye for an eye here. Always has been.”

“Is that why your mother took you away? Put down your weapon,” Gibbs questions him.

“Why? I’m never going to fly again.”

“Well, your career is probably over, but you haven’t hurt anybody yet. Keep it that way and I’ll do everything I can to help you.”

“There is a young girl carrying your brother’s baby. And they could us all the help they can get,” I inform him making him slowly put his gun down. We rush him and secure the weapon and him.

“Once we left, it was like Smoky Corners never existed. My mother erased it from our lives. I always felt guilty she had to leave Greg behind, but my father wouldn’t let her have both of us,” Newell explain to Gibbs in the interrogation back at NCIS the following day.

“Why did you take the Cobra?” Gibbs interrogates him.

“It’s fierce. Intimidating. I hoped it would scare the crap out of those hicks and save Greg’s life. But I was too late. The cabin was in flames. Greg trapped inside. Everett and the others started shooting at me and I got hit. They had hunting rifles. All I had was my pistol. I was cut off from the helo and couldn’t get back to the base. I knew my Marine Corps career was over. All that was left for me was revenge.”

“Wow, those are really pretty, Kate. Who are they from?” McGee questions Kate about the flowers on her desk.

“Tony,” Kate answers him.

“We had a tough couple of days. Kate pointed out that I’d taken one too many liberties. The flowers are a mea-culpa,” Tony explains.

“Tony, I’m blown away. They’re gorgeous… and they’re from Martha’s Garden, my favourite florist! How did you know?”

“Lucky guess.”

“He went through your purse and got the number off your PDA,” Gibbs tells her making Kate glare at Tony.

“Gibbs, are you coming to my graduation ceremony tonight?” I softly question him so no one else can hear me.

“Maybe.”

“You took out best student? How did you manage that?” Kate demands of me after the graduation ceremony finished.

“What can I say, the principle has a small penis and no brain,” I answer her making her glare at me.

“Alice.”

“What, I’m a bitch and can’t stand my teachers or school but I always do all my school work correctly.”

“You did good Alice,” Gibbs whispers in my ear making me jump because he just appeared out of nowhere.

“Thanks, Gibbs. Can you believe Kate? She didn’t think I would place high school, let alone being one of the best.”

“I never said that,” Kate defends herself.

“Right.”

“Come one, let’s go.”

“What? You got a date?”

“Alice,” Someone calls out making us turn around to see a boy running up to me, “I thought that was you.”
“John, how are you?” I question him with a tight voice as my body tense up making Gibbs give him a once over.
“Can I talk to you?”
“What do you call this? I call it talking.”
“Alone?”
“Sure,” I say slowly while following him because he has already walked away. When I get to where he stopped between two buildings, “What do you want John?”
“How is that man?”
“My boss.”
“Didn’t look like your boss, with how he was standing near you.”
“Well, that’s not my problem. What do you really want?”
“Why have you been answering my calls?”
“Because I don’t want to talk to you.”
“Why babe?”
“I’m not your babe, I’m not dating you.”
“You don’t get to decide that.”
“Yes, I do. I don’t want to date you and I don’t have to.”
“No you don’t,” He exclaims while grabbing my arm and shoving me against the building behind me.
“Let me go, now John.”
“Why what are you doing to do?” He questions me which is the wrong thing to do because I bring my leg up, slamming it into his stomach while twisting his arm making him realise my arms.
“I told you to realise me.”
“You little bitch,” he exclaims while punching me in the face making my head hit the building behind me. Before I can react, he is onto of my body holding me down while he bring his fist down on my face and upper body. I swing my fist but he dodges it, grabs the arm mid swing and pull it until I feel my bad shoulder pop before he holds my arms down under his legs. I fight to the best of my ability but he is twice as big as me. I attempted to call for help but he sticks something into my mouth so I can’t even breathe. Before I lose conciseness he is pulled off of my body and slammed into the other building, leaving me laying on the ground. I hear a struggle before Gibbs face comes into view.
“Alice, Alice look at me,” Gibbs orders me softly while pulling the thing, out of my mouth, something that looks like a plastic bag.
“Gibbs?” I say quietly.
“Yeah, I’m here. Hold on.”
“My arm,” I say while trying not to cry out in pain.
“It looks dislocated. I’m going to pop it back into place,” Gibbs informs me while placing my arm across my chest and holding it there with one of his hands. He places his other hand on my shoulder and says to me, “On three. On two,” The second he says two he pops my arm back into place making me cry out in pain, “Three. There you go, there you go. Kate get that dirt bag out of here,” Gibbs orders her while gently pulling me into his chest as I cry.
“Come on,” Kate orders John.
“Do you want to go to the hospital?”
“No, I don’t like hospitals,” I whisper into his chest.
“Or do you want Ducky to look you over.”
“Ducky please.”
“Okay, come on,” Gibbs says softly while getting me to stand up and leading me back over to his car while Kate puts John into her car.
“How did you find us?” I question Gibbs once he opened the front door for me to get in to his car.
“I went looking for you, you didn’t seem comfortable going with him.”
“Still doesn’t explain how you sound me.”
“I heard you cry out,” he explains to me before closing the door and going to talk to Kate about what
to do with John.
“Let’s go,” Gibbs says to me when he gets into the car after talking to Kate, he takes off without his normal speed that he uses.

Ducky, you in,” Gibbs call out to him when we walked into autopsy through the ambulance bay. “Here, Jethro,” Ducky calls out, as we walk over to an empty autopsy bed and Gibbs helps me up onto it gently. “What happened?”
“A crazy ex-boyfriend,” Gibbs explains to him before I can answer him.
“Oh, Alice, does it hurt anywhere?”
“My shoulder,” I answer before adding, “But that always hurts. Also my pride.”
“Let’s have a look at your shoulder,” Ducky says while gently removing my shirt so that he can see it. The second he sees the beginning of bruises that are covering my upper body and my shoulder has a black bruise already. Ducky asks me, “What happened to it? It looks like it’s been dislocated from this bruises.”
“It was, I put it back in for her,” Gibbs informs him.
“I want x-rays of the whole of your upper body. Lay down please,” Ducky orders me softly while bringing over the x-ray he uses for the dead body’s while I lay down on the cold, hard bed. “I’ll be back. I’m going to start the process on this dirt bag,” Gibbs softly says to me before turning to Ducky and saying, “Call me if you find anything.”
“While do,” Ducky answers while lining up the x-ray to start taking all the x-rays need to look for injuries, and how bad they are. After taking all the x-ray’s he need, the next step is to photograph the bruises I already have. Once he was done with the photographs, he gets the x-ray’s and head over to the light to look over them.
“Okay, you have a broken rib and a crack in your lower arm,” Ducky informs me before adding, “I want to put a plaster onto that arm to help it heal fast. There is nothing I can do for the rib but wrap your whole chest to hold it in place.”
“Thank you, Ducky. I know you were probably ready to go home. I just don’t like hospitals,” I softly say to him.
“It’s okay,” Ducky says while getting the gear to set my arm. After Ducky sets my arm and wrapped my chest, I put my shirt back on and head back up to the squad room where Kate and Gibbs are still working.
“Hey, Alice. What did Ducky say?” Kate questions me when she sees me walk in.
“He, um… he broke my rib and cracked my arm,” I softly state while holding up my arm that is in the cast.
“Go home Alice,” Gibbs orders me softly.
“I don’t want to go back home. I have nothing to do tonight,” I inform him, “Besides Kate has a date and I don’t want to meet him.”
“Why do you hate your sister’s boyfriends so much?” Gibbs questions me as Kate leaves for her date.
“Because they ain’t the right person for my sister.”
“Okay, come on,” Gibbs says with a chuckle while leading me to the elevator and out to his car. One the way back to Gibbs’ house we picked up pizza for dinner and spent the night working on his boat until we fall asleep from exhaustion.
Lt Jane Doe

“I’d have returned the money,” Kate says to Tony while I finished typing up the report on John after Abby did my makeup, while Kate and Tony went and got the morning coffee for everyone. “A buck eighty five?” Tony questions her while sitting down at her desk. “It’s the principle, not the amount.” “I didn’t notice at the drive through. I dropped the change in the ashtray and left.” “You didn’t notice because you were too busy leering at the blonde working the window.” “I wasn’t leering. Drooling a little maybe. The point is I didn’t notice her mistake until after we parked and I took the change out of the ashtray.” “Her point is you did notice. She’s not going to drop this for you Tony,” I explain to him. “The point is you did notice which makes not returning the money a conscious act,” Kate agrees with me.

“Well, I’d burn more than a buck eighty five in gas driving back there,” Tony defends himself. “It’s going to come back to haunt you.” “What is?” “Karma. What goes around comes around. Like a boomerang. And when yours comes back around, you’d better duck really low.” “Well, you don’t have to duck if you don’t believe.” “Believe what?” McGee questions us while walking over to his desk. “Kind of a private conversation, McGee.” “With all the bad karma you’ve built up with women alone I am surprised that something hasn’t just fallen off,” Kate says to Tony. “Kate, that’s not karma, that is an STD,” I explain to her making Tony check if his dick has fallen off. “Missing something, DiNozzo?” Gibbs questions him while walking over to me at his desk. “Kate just told him that he has not bits-and-pieces, and he believed her. Which really tells me he has no brain but he is looking in the wrong part of his body for that.” “Yes, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone. Once he finished talking to the person on the other end he informs us, “We’ve got a body at Norfolk. Get Ducky.” “I thought he was flying to London?” Kate says in confusion. “His plane doesn’t leave for a few hours,” I remind her. “Do you believe in Karma, boss?” Tony questions Gibbs. “I had three wives, DiNozzo,” Gibbs says without really answering Tony’s question. “Oh! Oh!” Tony exclaims when he spills his coffee on his pants. “Should’ve driven back,” Kate informs him while we follow Gibbs to the elevator. “Oh!” XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

“Who found the body, commander?” Gibbs question as we look around the crime scene at the naval station. “Those two seamen off the George Washington. She docked yesterday after a six month deployment in the Gulf. They were driving off station for two weeks leave – stopped to use the head,” Reynolds, the commander, answers Gibbs question. “IS that what they call bleachers in Norfolk?” I question him in disgust at that thought while stepping away from said bleachers. “One over there was locked.” “Yeah, well I guess I’d go out behind the bleachers, too,” Gibbs says making me step away from him too. “After discovering the body, they flagged down Petty Officer Cluxton, who was passing by on patrol.”
“You do all this, Petty officer?” Kate questions him while pointing to the crime scene tape.
“Yes, ma’am. After ascertaining the Lieutenant was deceased, I searched for I.D.,” Cluxton explains.
“You touched the body?” I cut her off.
“I was wearing gloves, ma’am.”
“I want to be there when Ducky is informed,” I comment making Gibbs smile while Kate glares at me.
“Go on,” Kate orders her while attempting to hit me when Cluxton isn’t looking.
“Finding no I.D. I radioed in the report, retraced my steps, marked my footprints for exclusionary purposes and taped off a twenty yard perimeter,” Cluxton explains like a dog with a new toy.
“How often did your patrol take you past this area last night?” Gibbs inquires of him.
“Every hour on the thirty, sir.”
“From?” I prompt him to continue.
“Twenty hundred hours when I came on duty, sir. Saw nothing unusual until Seaman Jennings and Wilkins flagged me down at zero one thirty two.”
“DiNozzo got their,” Gibbs orders but Tony cuts him off.
“Statements. On it, boss,” Tony says before running off to do it.
“I took their statements, sir,” Cluxton states.
“Do you mind is we take them, too?” I politely question him.
“No, ma’am. Of course, not.”
“You did a good job, petty office,” Kate complains him.
“Thank you, ma’am.”
“Petty Officer Cluxton,” McGee questions him in surprise when he sees her while putting down the bags of gear he is carrying before hugging Cluxton.
“Agent McGee!”
“Hey, how have you been?”
“I’ve been good. And you?”
“Good. Good. Sorry, Kate. Yeah, good. Uh… um… yeah, I’ve been assigned to NCIS Headquarters in the navy yard.”
“So I heard.”
“It was kind of a surprise transfer. Uh… you know, one minute I’m at Norfolk – the next…”
“You’re back at Norfolk. Maybe even permanently, McGee,” Gibbs cuts him off.
“Yeah, uh… sorry. Sorry, boss. The Petty Officer and I… we vetted civilian job applicants back… I’m going to start to measure and sketch now.”
“Yeah, McGee. You do that. That’ll be all for now, petty officer.”
“Yes, sir.”
“IF you need me, Special Agent Gibbs, I’ll be in my office,” Reynolds informs us.
“Okay.”
“And thank you,” I add when Gibbs falls to say it.
“You could have told her, Gibbs,” Kate declares to after everyone has left.
“Told who what?” Gibbs asks her in fake confusion.
“Petty officer Cluxton. She did a good job.”
“Did she now?”
“She wore gloves. Marked her footprints. Cordoned off the crime scene.”
“Searched the body for an I.D. without Ducky being here,” I remind her.
“How do you do that without disturbing the body, Agent Todd?” Gibbs adds his questions for her onto the end of my statement.
“She could have – should have waited for the M.E.” Kate says.
“That would have been doing job. Keep shooting.”
“Doctor Gutterman will be filling in, in my absence. I should warn you the old boy does love to hear himself talk,” Ducky warns Jimmy while getting the gear out.
“I’ll do my best to handle it, doctor,” Jimmy says to him when Ducky stops for a breath of air.
“Because I suspect the good doctor will be a tad grumpy as well.”
“Why’s that?”
“He lost the coin toss,”
“What coin toss, Ducky?” McGee questions Ducky.
“The one that two hours will send me to London to the assembly of the Collegium Mortem Scutantium.”
“Of course.”
“The society of medical examiners,” Kate and I state.
“Very good, Kate. I am not surprised, Alice,” Ducky comments.
“Four years of Latin has finally paid off,” Kate states.
“Do you know who founded the society?”
“Not a clue.”
“Leonardo Da Vinci himself,” I explain to her making Ducky smile at my endless knowledge.
“Wow!”
“Wow, indeed. Yes, we can trace the roots of our society dedicated to the history of forensic sciences to one formed by Leonardo in the same year that he began the Mona Lisa. In fact, that transcendent painting is a symbol,” Ducky rambles to her.
“Duck, do you want to meet with your society in London or give us a lecture?” Gibbs cuts Ducky off like normal.
“Oh, quite right. I do have a plane to catch. Thank you, Jethro,” Ducky exclaims while moving over to the dead girl, because that is what she is.
“De nada.”
“Now what story do you have to tell us, my dear?”
“You know, Ducky, some day one of them will talk back,” Kate says to Ducky with a smile.
“The language of silence may be hard to hear, Caitlin, but unlike the living, when the dead speak they do not lie. Small abrasions and visible bruising of the neck.”
“Strangled?” I question Ducky.
“Most likely. Doctor Gutterman can confirm that when he examines the soft tissues. Bruises on the thighs. She could have been raped. Gutterman can confirm that, too. Liver probe.”
“Ready,” Jimmy says while handing it to Ducky. Gibbs is searching the victim for an I.D.
“Usually you ask, Jethro.”
“Master-At-Arms already searched the body, Duck. I’m double-checking.”
“I do wish they’d wait until I arrive.”
“Hey boss, got statements from Seamen Jennings and Wilkens. Can I cut them loose? They’ve been at sea a long time,” Tony almost begs Gibbs on the seamen’s behalf.
“Know where to find them?” Gibbs questions him.
“Motel at Virginia Beach – girlfriends are waiting.”
“Yeah, let them go,” Gibbs says making Tony whistle and jerk his thumb letting the seamen go.
“Haven’t been with their women in… six months, three weeks, eighteen hours. Oh. Longest I went was eleven days, six hours.”
“I can’t believe men time that sort of thing. I mean how long you last ok, but how long you have been without? Nope I can’t and won’t believe that,” I exclaim.
“I can’t believe you actually know these things,” Kate exclaims.
“It’s a gift,” Tony explains with a mega smile.
“Liver temp eighty one point six,” Ducky informs us.
“Ambient temperature is seventy three point one,” Jimmy informs Ducky.
“Time of death?” Gibbs questions them.
“Uh… somewhere between twenty three hundred and zero one hundred. Well my children, I have a plane to catch,” Ducky explains.
“How long are you in London for, Doctor?” McGee questions Ducky.
“Only three days. Actually, I won’t be in London. I’ll be in the City of London.”
“There is a difference?”
“There’s a little known fact that the city of London isn’t actually London at all,” I state.  
“How can it not be London?”  
“No I.D. We’ve got a Lieutenant Jane Doe,” Gibbs says making Ducky freeze and then return to the victim and check the side of her neck.  
“The moment Special Agent Gibbs is done processing the scene, we get her back to the morgue,” Ducky orders Jimmy.  
“Of course, doctor,” Jimmy answers him.  
“Ducky, if it’s not London, what is it?” McGee questions Ducky but he never answers him.  
“Is that good for you?” McGee questions Abby from his spot under her desk.  
“Trust me, Mister Good-wrench, I’m smiling,” Abby answers him while looking down at his spot between her legs.  
“I’m not,” Gibbs says making McGee jumping up and hit his head on the desk.  
“Hey, Gibbs!”  
“Hey, boss,” McGee exclaims.  
“Special Agent Good-wrench?” Gibbs questions her.  
“McGee is rewiring my hotbox,” Abby explains.  
“Please tell me that’s not what I think it is because that will give me nightmares. If you want to do that, can you do it not a work?” I question her making her grin at me.  
“That’s a nickname for a bundle of receptors in the firewall that regulates the flow of energy throughout the system. See, but when stimulated correctly it sends waves and waves of rhythmic pulses. Waves… waves that uh… that hyper-crank the… the uh…. Transfer speed… uh… of digitized infor – Abby?” McGee rambles in fear of Gibbs, because everyone knows Gibbs is very protective of the Goth.  
“McGee is helping me speed up the search for Lieutenant Jane Doe’s fingerprints in the AFIS database. I’ve got to I.D. for fast to keep the hound at bay,” Abby explains to Gibbs and me.  
“I’m more Jack Russel Terrier,” Gibbs explains to her in return.  
“No, not you, Gibbs. Ducky. He’s barking at my heel like a dog with mange.”  
“Is he still here?” I question her in confusion.  
“In autopsy. And he’s so crabby he’ll give you a run for your money,” Abby exclaims making Gibbs walk away from her quickly. I have to run to keep up with him and get into the elevator.  
“Sheesh. I’ve seen that look before,” Tony comments on Kate facial expression when he returns from the bathroom.  
“You went to the men’s room forty-five minutes ago,” Kate exclaims.  
“You clocked me?”  
“What? You time how long you can go between sex encounters but you have never timed yourself in the head?” I question him in surprise.  
“What could take you so long? Don’t answer that!” Kate exclaimed.  
“Actually, Kate,” Tony attempts to explain but Kate cuts him off.  
“I don’t want to hear it!” Kate exclaims while putting her hands over her ears.  
“Returning the buck eighty five to the drive thru.”  
“You returned the money?”  
“And you didn’t bring back coffee that is it karma and Gibbs is going to kill you. I wat coffee,” I exclaim making Tony smile at me one track mind.  
“You see, that whole hands over the ears thing doesn’t work. I used to do that when I was a kid. I could hear everything my parents said. They had some interesting words,” Tony explains.  
“What do you mean, when you were a child? You are a children,” I explain to Tony slowly like I was explain it to a child.  
“I can’t believe you gave it back,” Kate exclaimed while ignoring me, but Tony glare at me lightly.  
“Well, she was off duty,” Tony explained.  
“You didn’t give it back,” I state.
“The pimply-faced mall rat at the drive-thru would have just pocketed it.”
“You brought the teacher coffee?” Kate questions Tony when he places a coffee on Gibbs desk.
“Well, thinking ahead, Kate. Thinking ahead. After you tell Gibbs we’ve got nothing, a cup of his favourite brew will tame the beast.”
“After I tell Gibbs?”
“Tell me what?” Gibbs demands as he walks into the squad room.
“Hey, boss. I got you a little,” Tony proudly says while handing Gibbs the coffee but he just spills the coffee over himself, “Ah!”
“What are the odds of that happening twice in one day?” Kate questions Tony while chuckling at his misfortune.
“The same as me firing the two of you if I don’t get a report,” Gibbs snaps at them.
“The victim’s picture is on the Navy intranet to department heads of every in-station vessel and base unit. Nothing yet,” I bite the bullet and tell Gibbs the bad news that Kate and Tony are avoiding telling him.
“P.S.A.?”
“No missing females, officers or enlisted,” Tony answers before turning to Kate and explains, “P.S.A. is personnel support activity.”
“I’ve been here a year, Tony. I know the acronyms,” Kate snaps at him.
“Ah, a year. It seems like only yesterday you were mixing up your NAV-SACs with your NAV-SOCs.”
“It was yesterday. But I get what you mean, it seems like yesterday that she was getting sick from fucking her co-workers,” I exclaim making Kate push me to stop me from talking.
“Gosh, our little girl has grown up fast, hasn’t she, boss?” Tony questions Gibbs but his only answer is a smack to the back of his head making him adds, “Ow! What was that for?”
“Not growing up! What else you got?” Gibbs answers him while staring at Tony.
“Nothing,” Kate answers making Gibbs look away from Tony to her.
“Nothing.”
“Hey guys,” Abby exclaims while running up to us.
“But it looks like Abby does.”
“Who is our victim?” Gibbs question her.
“Un, we do not know,” Abby exclaims without a care in the world.
“Then what are you doing here?” I softly ask her before Gibbs can snap at her.
“Well, we’re… we’re… we’re through,” McGee explains without answering my question.
“We ran the entire AFIS databank. We didn’t get a match,” Abby explains when it looks like Gibbs might kill McGee for that comment.
“How could AFIS not find a match? She’s a navy lieutenant,” Gibbs exclaims in anger at not having answers.
“No she isn’t, Jethro. Lieutenant Jane Doe is misnomer. The poor woman was never in the navy. Match this sperm against the sample I removed from our victim. Please,” Ducky informs us while handing Abby an evidence bag.
“You’ve been holding out on me, doctor.”
“Yes, agent Gibbs. I have.”

XXX

“I saw this trident carved into the neck of the victim at the crime scene and told no one. Not even Gibbs. All I can do is apologize and assure you that such an inexcusable lapse of forensic protocol will never happen again. Right. Ten years ago, another Jane Doe was found rapes and strangled in a culvert beside an athletic field at Norfolk. She, too, was a civilian dressed in the uniform of a naval lieutenant. She had a high blood alcohol level and a trident carved into the side of her neck. Abby has confirmed that sperm from both victim came from the same man. So we are pursuing a serial rapist and murderer,” Ducky reports to us after returning to the squad room after talking to Gibbs in private while pulling up the old file on the plasma screen.
“This note was found three days after the crime scene had been processed,” Gibbs explains while
pulling up the letter.
“A challenge to investigators,” Kate states.
“You think, Kate?” Tony questions her.
“I’ve asked Commander Reynolds to place our crime scene under discreet surveillance. Since ninety four was the first year we deployed women on warships, this wacko may be an enlisted man acting out a revenge fantasy,” Gibbs informs us.
“They investigate units with tridents on their patches?”
“Gee, I don’t think they thought about that, Tony. Yeah, they investigated every ship and shore division with female officers. Nada. Abs, do need to go to the head?” Gibbs states out sarcastically before question Abby who is holding her hand up like in school.
“No, I have a question. Isn’t ten years a long time between murders?” Abby questions us.
“Absolutely. This doesn’t fit a serial killer’s profile. And look at the victims, he went through all the trouble of dressing two dead civilians like a lieutenant that he hates, but why is one blonde and the other brunette? One Anglo, one Hispanic? A killer with a set fantasy wouldn’t and couldn’t change like that, it would have to match the person to a tee,” I state the fact.
“They’re both cute for being dead,” Tony states making us all give him a disgusted look.
“He’s a wacko! Maybe just being female and intoxicated was good enough. Unless Abby blew the sperm match,” Gibbs stares.
“No way!” Abby cuts him off.
“The same man killed both of them.”
“But it doesn’t make sense, if he is going to kill somebody and dress them up, why don’t they match each other? Rapist don’t change their victim, it is a set fantasy, they can’t change from it. It’s like a, a,” I exclaim in anger but I am unable to think of anything.
“I understand what you are saying but until we find another lead this is all we have. Which means he didn’t rape and murder for ten years because,” Gibbs questions but leaves the end open for the others to finish.
“He was in prison!” Tony and Kate exclaim.
“Hey! Okay, homework assignments. McGee?”
“Boss,” McGee says while looking at Gibbs waiting for his assignment for that case.
“Search JAG records for sailors incarcerated after October of ninety four and…”
“Recently released. On it,” McGee finishes for Gibbs while cutting him off.
“Kate, suspect interviews from ten years ago. If any of those men still live in Norfolk, question them.”
“Okay, Kate agrees.
“DiNozzo, flash this Jane Doe at every bar, club and strip joint within a mile of the Norfolk gate. Given the victim’s blood alcohol level, maybe he picked her up in one of them.”
“No problem,” Tony exclaims in happiness at the assignment.
“Abby, forensics may have missed something in ninety four. Go over it again.”
“Yes, professor,” Abby exclaims.
“Come on people! Let’s go! Let’s go!” Gibbs orders making everyone scatter to do their job but he calls Abby back, “Hey, wait. Come here. You’ll need Ducky’s help.”
“No I won’t,” Abby exclaims making Gibbs point to Ducky who is staring at the victims photos, lost in thought and time.
“Ab.”
“Yes I will. Hey uh… Duckman!”
“Yeah?” Ducky questions her while turning around to look at her.
“The cross poplars in my polarizing light microscope won’t centre.”
“That could be a problem. However, I think I have a solution,” Ducky exclaims while they walk away leaving Gibbs and me alone.
“What do you want me to do boss?” I question him.
“I want you to profile him,” Gibbs orders me.
“I’m not that good.”
“You seemed to know what you are on about,” Gibbs said while pointing out the two photos as proof.
“That’s easy. It is the first thing someone is taught when they take a profiling course. I can’t profile this guy.”
“Okay, worth a try.”
“Why didn’t you have Kate do it?”
“Because she didn’t care that the victims’ don’t match, you do.”
“It doesn’t make sense to me, rapist don’t change their victim. But what I do know is, as the victim’s age goes up, the rapists age goes down.”
“But the first victim was killed in ninety-four. How is that possible?”
“I don’t know, but that is the norm. But in the norm, the victims all look the same.”
“Well, have petty officer Cluxton deliver it ASAP,” Gibbs orders whoever is on the other end of his phone, “No, the evening pouch will not do, commander!”
“He didn’t wait three days?” I question Gibbs in surprise as he rings Abby.
“Abs, Norfolk got a not from our wacko. He made the drop before our surveillance was in place. You’ll have it in a couple hours. Listen, compare the in, the paper, the handwriting. Did you get DNA off the first one?”
“Gas pain?” Gibbs questions Kate when she continues to smile at him.
“What? No!” Kate exclaims.
“PMS?” I question her innocently.
“No!” She snaps at me in anger.
“Well then stop grinning and tell me what you got,” Gibbs orders her while tapping my leg in the way I have titled, ‘behave around your sister or else.’
“When he found the first Jane Doe while jogging, petty officer Goetz was in port on a carrier, the Teddy Roosevelt.”
“Agent Dawes interrogated him a number of times on the Big Stick and here,” I remind her what is in the old report that I have been reading.
“Big stick?”
“Teddy Roosevelt. ‘talk softly, carry a…’” Gibbs explains to her but she cuts him off.
“Carry a big stick. Cute. Goetz stayed in the Navy, is a chief and arrived in Norfolk on the same carrier as the seamen who found our Jane Doe. The… honest Abe.”
“‘Shall not perish.’”
“What?”
“Lincoln’s not Honest Abe. It’s ‘shall not perish.’”
“What kind of a nickname is ‘shall not perish’?”
“Ask Chief Goetz when you pull him in for questioning.”
“Okay.”
“This have to do with the body I found ten years ago, sir?” Goetz questions Gibbs from his spot in interrogation while Kate and I watch them from observation like normal.
“Yeah,” Gibbs answers him.
“Isn’t there a statute of limitation on questioning a suspect?”
“I didn’t say you were a suspect.”
“Why else would I be here, sir?”
“Another body was found two nights ago. Same M.O.”
“She have a trident here? He said he’d be back.”
“Now how did you know that? Agent Dawes never told you.”
“No, sir. But he had me write out ‘I’ll be back’ with my right and left hand. Not too hard to figure out why.”
“You arrived two days ago on the Abraham Lincoln?”
“Yes, sir.”
“First night back, where’d you go?”
“You think I raped and murdered her?!”
“I never said she was raped.”
“You said the same M.O.”
“Where did you spend your first night ashore?” Gibbs demands of the suspect but when he fails to answer Gibbs prompts him, “Clubbing?”
“I didn’t leave the station.”
“Six months at sea and your first night in port you spend it aboard ship?”
“No, sir. I said I didn’t leave the station. I stayed with a friend.”
“Stationed here at Norfolk?”
“Yes, sir.”
“Your friend married?”
“No, sir.”
“An officer?”
“Yes, sir. So you see how I can’t give you the name.”
“Chief, I’m not interested in ruining careers. I need to know where you spend the night of the murder.”
“Can we speak off the record, sir? Just you and me?” Goetz whispers to Gibbs so the only reason I know what he said is by reading his lips.
“Kate, stop the tape,” Gibbs orders us.
“Stop the tape,” Kate orders the technician who does it without hesitation.
“Yes, ma’am,” The technician answers her.
“No sound?” Tony questions when he walks into the observation.
“Gibbs is having a private interrogation. No sound, no video,” Kate explains to him.
“McGee need to talk to him.”
“That’s not going to happen,” I inform him without looking away from integration.
“I’m not going to interrupt him,” McGee agrees with me about that.
“Kate?” Tony passes the dirty job on to the next victim.
“No,” Kate answers him with a chuckle.
“Okay, fill her in, McGee. Tell her about Harlan Wilson. Meet me in the garage in five,” Tony orders while leaving the room.
“I’ll wait here and let Gibbs know where you are going,” I inform them as they leave the room after Tony.

“Chief Goetz’s alibi checks out,” Gibbs informs us while walking into the squad room.

“Where was he?” Tony questions Gibbs.

“With a friend.”
“You’re taking the word of a friend?” Kate inquires of Gibbs.
“No. saliva swab to compare his DNA with sperm taken from the victim. Any other question? Good. My turn. Where’s McGee?”
“He took hairbrush to Abby to compare his DNA to the sperm. Probie won’t give up the obvious,” Tony answers him.
“Harlan was dead when the second murder occurred. Wasn’t her, Tony?” I ask the question on all our minds.

“Very dead. Big mother heart attack. Fax of the death certificate.”
“How many bars and clubs did you canvas?” Gibbs questions Tony.
“Twenty four, twenty five.”
“Which was it? Twenty four or twenty five?” Gibbs snaps at Tony.
“You in a bad mood, boss?”
“NO!”
“Didn’t think so. I covered every one within a mile of the Norfolk main gate. Like you said.”
“What about the other gates?”
“You didn’t ask me to look at I’m… I’m on that.”
“Kate. You go with him,” Gibbs orders her while pointing to were Tony ran off too.
“You want me to go bar hopping with Tony!?” Kate exclaims in annoyance at that very thought but she follows Tony anyway. Gibbs and I walk to the back elevator and I get to push the button to call the elevator.
“Agent Gibbs!” Cluxton calls while running up to Gibbs and I.
“Got the note, Petty Officer?” Gibbs questions her.
“I do, sir. Knowing how important the note is forensically, I jump a ride with the CH-Fifty three that was headed to Quantico, caught the Amtrak to D.C., and then hailed a cab.”
“Well, that’s creative thinking, petty officer Cluxton,” I state.
“Thank you, ma’am. Are you taking the note to the lab now? I’m pretty interested in forensics, sir,” Cluxton says to me before staring at Gibbs while ignoring me, as we step into the elevator making Gibbs node at her. She steps into the elevator with us making me step back into Gibbs chest.

Well, DiNozzo, at least I can tell Ducky you I.D.ed Jane Doe number two. If her apartment’s that clean, this Janice Santos probably knew her killer. When you’re finished with the crime scene, bring everything back here. See you at Abby’s in the morning,” Gibbs orders Tony over the phone while standing in the stairway.

“They find something?” I questions Gibbs once he hangs up with Tony.
“Yeah, the victim’s name, Janice Santos.”
“Interesting.”
“Go home and get some sleep, that’s an order.”
“Yes sir,” I say to him with a salute making Gibbs smile while I turn and leave the building for the day.

DNA processing could take several days. But knowing the hyper-emergency of the case, I processed all of the sperm samples is just thirty seven hours,” Abby exclaims when we arrive in the Lab the following day.

“Is it gonna be another thirty-seven before we get some results?” Gibbs question her.
“Okay, DNA off the first note matched the sperm. The killer wrote it. The second note… no prints… no DNA.”
“What about the handwriting?” Kate questions her.
“I could be a match. I sent a copy to an expert I met at a forensics conference in the Greenbrier. It’s suck a sweet place. They have golf, tennis, falconry…”
“It’s so cool.”
“Yeah. Almost a lost art, I’m afraid.”
“Like forensic reporting?” I joke making Abby smile at me.
“Okay, moving on to saliva, always a crowd pleaser. There is no way Chief Goetz’s DNA comes close to matching the sperm.”
“I guess you were right, boss,” Tony says to Gibbs.
“You guess?” Gibbs says to him.
“I know.”
“Abby, why did you call us all in here when you have nothing?”
“But I do. I match the DNA off the brush McGee gave me. Hellooo, Mister Wilson! The DNA matches the sperm found in both victims,” Abby informs us.
“That’s impossible. Wilson had been weeks when Janice Santos was raped,” I exclaim in confusion.
“DNA does not lie.”
“Hey,” Gibbs snaps at Tony.
“Hey, he died before she did, Boss! I swear,” Tony exclaims.
“Boss, what if… what if Wilson’s semen was inserted in Janice Santos after she was murdered?”
McGee stutters out in fear of Gibbs.
“Eww!” Kate exclaims in disgust.
“How did the murderer get the semen?” Gibbs questions everyone.
“Same way I did,” Ducky explains to us.

“Looking at the time-code, this was the day before the murder,” McGee exclaims while watching the video surveillance of the evidence room while standing near the plasma room in the squad room.
“What is it, McGee?” Gibbs question the idiot.
“She’s the one.”
“Well, how can you tell? She’s not even near the refrigerator,” Tony exclaims in confusion.
“His gut,” Gibbs states.
“No, no, no. It’s not just my gut, boss. When I was back at Norfolk, Cynthia, petty officer Cluxton and I… we were friendly,” McGee informs us.
“Really?” Abby exclaims in fake surprise.
“She liked me… but not that way,” McGee explained to her.
“What way would that be, Probie?” Tony question him.
“I didn’t ask Tony, and she didn’t tell.”

“Cluxton’s gay?” I questions him in confusion.
“Boss, we I.D.ed Janice Santos in a lesbian bar,” Tony explains to Gibbs.
“There’s more. Petty officer Cluxton used her mother’s name. Her father was an NCIS agent before,” McGee attempts to explain.
“Special Agent Dawes,” Gibbs, McGee and I exclaim together.
“Boss, I dint think about this until… I think that’s her!”
“That’s okay. Run the tape,” Gibbs orders McGee.

Janice Santos was your lover. You met her at Flip Side. A lesbian bar,” Gibbs states to Cluxton in interrogation.

“Which is why the bartender didn’t respond to me,” Tony exclaim from our spot in observation.
“No, her reason is disgusting and childlike,” I explain to him.
“Are you accusing me of being gay, sir?” Cluxton accused Gibbs in anger from her spot in interrogation.
“No. no, I’m accusing you of murder,” Gibbs explains to her.
“Murder? I didn’t murder anyone, sir.”
“Did she jilt you, petty officer?”
“I have no idea what you’re talking about, sir.”
“It doesn’t matter. We have you on tape semen from the Jane Doe case your father worked ten years ago,” Gibbs explained to her while showing her a printed off photo of her doing just that.
“Can you identify on that tape what I’m removing in the evidence locker, sir? I can’t.”
“You copied the killer’s M.O. from your father case file.”
“I’m not sure where my father’s case file are, sir.”
“You strangled Janice Santos, put her in a navy uniform, carved a trident in her neck, inserted semen from the first murder in her virgin.”
“Not true. None of it, sir.”
“Even left a note like the one found at the first crime scene.”
“I didn’t leave that not. I found it.”
“So who killed Janice Santos?”
“Obviously whoever murdered the Jane Doe ten years ago, sir.”
“No, not whoever. His name is Harlan Wilson. A former Machinist mate stationed at Norfolk.”
“You caught him, sir?”
“No. No, but we matched his DNA to semen found in both victims.”
“And why are you accusing me?”
“Harlan Wilson died five weeks before you killed Janice.”
“Damn! Damn! Damn!” Cluxton shouts in anger.
“Wow, she’s pretty flexible,” McGee exclaims when he sees Kate stretching in the naval gym. “Just don’t let her catch you looking at her, Probie,” Tony explains to him but she has already seen him. “I think she saw me. She gave me that look.” “What look?” “The look she’s always giving you.” “Your dead know McGee. It was sorta nice knowing you,” I explain to him making him jump because he didn’t know I was standing behind him. “Yep. She saw you. Hope you wore a cup,” Tony agrees with me while giving McGee some helpful advice. “Okay, welcome to my version of close combat training. McGee?” Gibbs says while walking into the gym. “Yeah?” McGee asks him in fear. “You start with Kate. Go on!” Gibbs orders him and when it was just Tony and me, Gibbs just turn to Tony and adds, “All right, you and me in the ring today.” “Are you sure about that? I’ve been taking classes,” Tony informs Gibbs making him smile. “In what?” “Boxing.” “What do you want me to?” I question Gibbs. “Watch and learn,” Gibbs answers me. “Whoo, whoo! Come on buddy,” Tony exclaims from his spot in the boxing ring with Gibbs. He is dodging and weaving even though Gibbs hasn’t thrown a punch yet. “Not bad, DiNozzo,” Gibbs complements Tony. “Thanks. You learn how to box in the Marines?” “Nope. Corps doesn’t teach boxing.” “That’s your loss,” Tony exclaims while throwing a punch at Gibbs but Gibbs just grab his arm and throw him into the ground and pin him down with a smile on his face. “They teach fighting,” Gibbs informs Tony as his phone rings. “Your phone,” Tony gasps out to Gibbs because Gibbs is holding his throat and the wind has been knocked at him. “Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone while letting Gibbs go. “Are you going to take that abuse, McGee?” Tony calls over to McGee while Kate pins him to the ground again. “No!” McGee answers him before flipping Kate over onto the floor. “That’s more like it, McGee. Why were you holding back?” Kate questions McGee. “Well, you’re a… I mean, I’ve never wrestled a…” “A girl? Tony, I look like a girl to you?” “All I see are two NCIS special agents,” Tony wisely answers her. “Well, if I can have a say, all I see are two little, five year old girls,” I explain to Kate and McGee glare at me. “Me, too,” Kate agrees with Tony before kneeing McGee in the balls. “Training’s over. We’re heading to Quantico. Guy tried to outrun a five hundred pound bomb,” Gibbs explains to us over McGee’s groans and moans of pain. “And?” “He tried to outrun a bomb. Who the hell can do that? I can’t outrun a bomb, can you?” I snap at her in confusion about her question. “He lost,” Gibbs agrees with me about the only possible outcome for that race. “Hey, she had three older brothers growing up. I think there’s some unresolved issues there,” Tony
informs McGee once he gets over his pain.
“You think?” McGee snaps at him.

“Break out the gear. I’m going to find out who’s in charge of this circus,” Gibbs orders us while looking around all the men tramping over our crime scene after Tony brings the car to a screeching stop that would make Gibbs proud.

“You didn’t have to stop like that,” Kate snaps at Tony as we get out of the once Gibbs has walked away.

“I know that,” Tony explains to her before opening the door and placing the blame on McGee like normal, “Sorry about that, Probie. But it’s your fault.”

“My fault?” McGee questions Tony in confusion like the rest of us.

“Yeah, the brakes grab. It’s your job to see the vehicle’s in perfect running condition,” Tony informs him of another job he is supposed to do, while we grab our gear out of the car. I grab Gibbs and me gear and place my on my back while holding Gibbs in my hand. McGee steps out of the van and slams the door shut in frustration with Tony.

“You should have called. I could have saved you guys a trip,” De Luca, one of the idiots that are destroying the crime scene, informs us before spiting next to his shoes.

“Why don’t we start with… who the hell are you?” Gibbs questions the idiot.

“Gunnery sergeant De Luca, C-I-D.”

“Is this your idea of how to run a crime scene, gunnery sergeant?”

“Nope, it’s my idea of how to run an accidental death investigation, special agent.”

“Gibbs.”

“Well, a civilian decided to trespass in the wrong place at the wrong time. Marines didn’t spot im until it was too late.”

“What was a civilian doing down here, gunny?” I question him in confusion.

“My guess, he was a scavenger. Lot of metal and scrap iron’s been dumped here over the years.”

“Enough to risk blowing yourself up over?” Gibbs inquires of him again.

“I didn’t say he was smart, agent Gibbs. But hey, you want NCIS to handle the paperwork on this one? Fine,” De Luca states before almost spitting on Gibbs shoes.

“Get down here and secure the scene.”

“Just make sure your people stay inside the marked areas cleared by E-O-D. I don’t need another dead civilian on my hand,” De Luca says before almost spiting on Gibbs shoe again and then he walks away from us.

“Attractive,” Kate states.

“I want everybody off this range except E-O-D personnel,” Gibbs orders us.

“What about Mister Potato Head?” Tony inquires of Gibbs.

“No, he stays. With luck, he’ll spit on my boots.”

“Look for a reason to whack him in the head, Gibbs?” Kate question Gibbs.

“No. too shoot him.”

“Tony, didn’t you tell me that you worked a case on a live impact range once?” Kate questions Tony as we begin to walk down the yellow path of the safe area.

“Yeah, that’s right. Fort A.P. Hill. Tragic,” Tony answers her making McGee get afraid because he is walking in front of us.

“What happened?” McGee questions us.

“E-O-D missed ordnance marking the path. Boom! Agent walking point, a Probie, of course, blew his foot off.”

“You’re kidding, right?”

“Ha! Of course I’m kidding… Probie,” Tony says to McGee right as we get down to the range with McGee in front of us. Tony turns to whisper to Kate while falling further behind McGee before call out to McGee, “We’re right behind you, buddy!”

“You’re doing great.”

“Some of them are buried under the ground,” I call out to scare McGee more.
“Judging by the shrapnel pattern, I’d say our young victim was running when he was hit,” Ducky informs us when we all arrive at the impact area.

“How can you tell, Doctor?” Jimmy questions while kissing up to Ducky.

“Ok, I’ve seen far too many of these types of wounds during my tour in Vietnam.”

“How about the bruising on his wrists and face, Duck?” Gibbs questions Ducky while pointing out the bruising.

“It’s possible it was caused by blast concussion. We’ll know more when we get him back.”

“This guy was no scavenger, boss. Salvatore Ferragamo’s,” Tony exclaims in excitement while staring at the shoes.

“What?” Gibbs and I ask in confusion.

“Italian shoes, expensive. The pair I got cost almost five hundred bucks. Well, not everybody shops at Wal-Mart. I’m not saying you shop at Walmart… or even if that’s a bad thing.”

“How’s it going, Kate?” Gibbs questions Kate while ignoring Tony’s rambling.

“Almost finished. I’ve got McGee doing measurements. What are you doing?” Kate answers before asking Gibbs when she sees him walking away.

“Following our victim’s prints. They came from over there.”

“Well how’d he get down here? We’re at least five miles from the nearest civilian road.”

“Someone dropped him off,” I suggest the only way possible.

“Hey, that area hasn’t been cleared yet! Agent Gibbs! Hey, are you trying to get yourself killed?! Are you deaf or nuts?!” De Luca calls over to Gibbs while following him, Gibbs answers him but they have move to far away for us to hear the answer but I am willing to bet it was a sarcastic answer. They have found another victim in the car that they are looking at but this one is burnt to the point that it unrecognisable to anyone.

“He means well, but often I have an overwhelming urge to slap him. Is that wrong?” Ducky questions the poor victim while Gibbs and I walk into autopsy.

“I do it all the time,” Gibbs informs Ducky what we all know about him.

“So I’ve noticed. But only on the back of the head.”

A slap in the face would be humiliating. Back of the head’s a wakeup call. Looks like he got both.”

“You were right. His facial injuries weren’t from the bombs. Our victim received a rather savage beating before his death.”

“And our crispy critter?” I questions him.

“He wasn’t burned by today’s explosions. Tests indicate the chap’s been deceased at least six months.”

“There are more bodies out there,” Gibbs states.

“Yes, I was afraid of that.”

“We’ve stumbled onto a bone yard, Duck.”

“Yeah.”

“A serial killer’s dumping ground,” I state.

“Hey, what is that? A video game?” Tony questions Abby and McGee who is working hard and fast on her computers.

“No, Tony! We’re getting hacked!” Abby snapped at him.

“If they get into Abby’s computer, the entire NCIS network is next,” McGee adds.

“I can’t stop him. Do something, McGee!”

“I’ve… I’ve never seen code like this,” McGee stutters at Abby seconds before all the computers powered down for no apparent reason. “Ah, why to go, Abby!” McGee exclaims to Abby in shock who looks as shocked as him.

“I didn’t do anything! I thought you did.”

“No.”

“I did. What the hell is going on here?” Gibbs exclaims while holding up the plug for the computer.
“We were pulling a fingerprint match from the AFIS database and we set of some kind of cyber-
attack.”
“They were definitely waiting for us,” Abby adds onto McGee’s comment.
“What?!” Tony questions them.
“Well, I don’t know, Tony. And right now I’m afraid to turn my machine back on.”
“And the speed that they were cracking our encryption at. I mean, there’s only a few computers in
the world with that type of power,” McGee explains to us.
“Can you name them? Or are you just quoting what you have been told?” I question him.
“Well, the… the CERN Institute in Geneva, IBN’s research facility, rumours of a few in China.”
“Oh, good. So that should be easy to find them. Where is my match?” Gibbs snaps at McGee.
“China! Do you want some?” Tony answers Gibbs before offering McGee some of his snack.
“Thanks,” McGee says to Tony while eating the snack.
“Whoever this guy is, he’s got friends in high places, Gibbs,” Abby warns us.
“So do we. It’s called Gibbs and I don’t want to be in the room when he finds whoever is hindering
our investigation,” I remind Abby making her smile.

“Victor Gera. A-K-A Guido Valentino. Career criminal,” Kate informs us who the victim was, once
we returned to the squad room.
“Guido Valentino?” McGee questions her.
“That’s the alias used in L.A.”
“Started running numbers in Chicago as a kid. Moved on to jacking cars as a teen. Graduated to drug
dealing on the West Coast,” Tony continues to report to Gibbs.
“Six months ago he showed up in D.C.” Kate adds onto the end.
“Mafia?” Gibbs questions us.
“Probie! In case you forget. My name is Tony DiNozzo. Italian. It doesn’t make me Mafia, now does
it?” Tony snaps in offence at McGee.
“No, of course not. I’m sorry.”
“Prego.”
“McGee, what’s the connection between a small time hood and a super computer?” I snap at McGee
in annoyance.
“Well, I have no idea,” McGee attempts to answer me.
“Ooh, wrong answer,” Gibbs cuts him off.
“I’ll go look for the right one now.”
“Why would the mob, or anyone, stash bodies at a marine bombing range?” Kate asks the question
we are all thinking.
“Because it’s the last place they’d look for him,” Gibbs answers her.
“Who’d be nuts enough to go down there looking for bodies?” Tony questions Kate while Gibbs
phone begins to ring.
“Besides us?” Kate questions him in return.
“Besides you, you mean?” I correct her.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone, “You did what? I’m on my way!” Gibbs yells into his
phone before slamming it down and turning to us and adding, “That was Gunny Sergeant De Luca.
He’s not done screwing up my investigation.”
“Wow. I thought you were the only one that could piss him off like that,” Kate exclaims to Tony in a
whisper once Gibbs has stormed away to talk to the idiot.
“You never met his second wife,” Tony answers her like that explains everything.
“And I never want to. I want the happy and nice Gibbs back, the one that brings me coffee,” I
complain to them making them give me looks because they wouldn’t call him happy or nice.

“E.O.D. has cleared about ten percent of the range so far. In this small area and in a relatively short
span of time, we found three bodies. Do the math and we could be looking at potentially thirty or
more victims concealed down there,” Kate reports to Gibbs once him and fuck face, De Luca, returns to the squad room that night.

“Gunny, I want you to coordinate with the Provost Martial. I want a cordon around that range twenty four hours a day,” Gibbs orders De Luca.

“Agent Gibbs, that’s a lot of man power. Do you really think,” De Luca complains to Gibbs.

“Then you better get moving,” I cut him off in annoyance.

“Right,” De Luca states while Gibbs walks away from us, “Is there some secret to getting on his good side?”

“Oh, there’s no secret,” Tony explains to him without telling him what it is.

“He doesn’t have one,” Kate adds onto Tony’s sentence.

“Ah, excuse me, boss,” McGee calls over to Gibbs while speed walking into squad room.

“What?” Gibbs snaps at him.

“We completed the back-trace on the intruder’s system.”

“Yeah, who?” I question McGee.

“Yeah, an uh… well, the thing is,” McGee stutters out while the elevator dings as the door opens, “That.”

“It’s me. Why is NCIS interested in Vic Gera, Gibbs?” Fornell cuts McGee off.

“When are you leaving?” I question Fornell before Gibbs can answer him.

“Who says we were interested in him?” Gibbs questions him while stepping closer to Fornell.

“You ran his prints through AFIS. Where did you get them?” Fornell demands of him.

“He gave them to us. Can you leave now?” I inform him while trying to get him to leave still. That seems to be the only thing I do when I see his ugly face.

“You have him in custody?” Charles, another FBIS agent, demands of us.

“Technically speaking,” Gibbs says to him before leading them over to the back elevator.

“Once you see him, are you leaving?” I demand of Fornell as we all step into the elevator and hit the button for autopsy.

“Why do you not like me?” Fornell questions me finally.

“Why would anyone lie you? You have no personality or hair. And you work for the FBI, there goes all the possible reasons to be liked.”

“You don’t like me because I don’t have hair?”

“No, I don’t like you because you work for the FBI, but not having hair is another reason why most people don’t like you.”

“Where’s you find him?” Fornell questions us when we get into autopsy after a quiet ride in the elevator after my conversation with Fornell about him leaving.

“On a live fire range at Quantico,” Gibbs explains to him.

“He was killed in a practice bomb drop this morning,” Kate explains to Fornell.

“Is he Mafia?” Tony suddenly exclaims.

“He’s an undercover FBI agent, DiNozzo,” Fornell explains to Tony in defence of the dead guy.

“When we saw you print search, we were hoping Vic was alive,” Charles informs us.

“I want his killer, Gibbs.”

“Is that an officer for a joint investigation?” Gibbs questions Fornell making me pull a face at that thought.

“I can’t.”

“Thank god. We got off easy this time, Bye-bye,” I exclaim while waving at him.

“Kate, Tony, escort our guest out,” Gibbs orders them.

“I need to talk to you alone,” Fornell exclaims to Gibbs.

“Our usual conference room?” Gibbs questions Fornell while walking to the elevator.

“What’s going on? Fornell seems unusually upset,” Kate exclaims when the doors closes behind them.

“For an FBI agent,” Tony and I correct but agrees with her.

“How would you feel if one of your team was lying on a slab?” Charles questions us.

“Depends,” Tony says to him.
“On who it is,” I finish for Tony when Charles gives Tony a look.
“Are you always a smart ass?” Charles questions us.
“Just to you boys from the Hoover building,” Tony answers him.
“Only for the boys who have to suck Fornell off,” I overlap Tony making Charles glare at me.
“Is me,” Fornell finishes telling Gibbs something while walking into autopsy only to be arrested by his own people.
“Sorry, Tobias,” Charles say.
“He’s not and you know all the times I ask you to leave, I never meant like this,” I exclaim to Fornell.

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“Het, Tiffany! Enough with the smoking already!” A man by the name of Rickey, who is on the monitor in MTAC, complains to a women the next morning.
“Get off my back, Rickey,” Tiffany snaps at Rickey.
“I’m paying you to dance, not get lung cancer!”
“All right, all right!”
“I thought Tiffany was your numero uno,” Another man by the name of Balducci says to him.
“Bag, I dumped her,” Rickey answers him.
“Rickey, how do you dump something that looks like that?”
“I’ve got to remember that one,” Tony exe watching the monitor.
“Why do you always what to remember the bad guys likes? I mean first the drug dealers, now this guys?” I inquire of Tony making him throw me an annoyed look.
“The comedian’s Napolitano’s son, Little Rickey,” Charles introduce us to the men we are watching like creeps.
“Who’s the body builder?”
“Sal Balducci. Napolitano’s enforcer. And that’s the man himself. Jimmy Napolitano. A-K-A Jimmy Naps. He’s politically connected and has the finest lawyers money can buy. He’s virtually untouchable.”
“We got a problem,” Jimmy says on the monitor.
“What kind of problem, pops?” Rickey inquires of Jimmy.
“Not here. Inside.”
“You got ears inside?” Tony questions the FBI.
“No. jimmy Naps is high-tech. camera two, get me tight on the thug by the rear entrance. They find our bugs and wire before we finish installing them,” Charles explains.
“Or your mole tips them off,” Gibbs offers to him.
“There’s no mole. Jimmy Naps set Fornell up. They study us like we study them. Rumour has it they have dossiers on all of us. They even know we’re watching them right now. Camera one, show me Abe. Hello Abe.”
“Abe?” Tony questions him.
“As in Vigoda. That’s the FBI call sign for him.”
“Oh, yeah. It does sort of look like him,” Tony says before adding with an accent, “‘Tom. Can you get me off… for old times’ sake?’”
“‘Sorry, Solly. No can do,’” Charles answers Tony with his own fake accent.
“How old are you two? One?” I question them.
“You two through?” Gibbs overlaps me.
“Sorry, the point is, Agent Gibbs, it’s impossible to get near them,” Charles defend himself.
“Agent Gera did.”
“And he’s dead.”
“Gibbs are you going to talk to Fornell now?” I questions Gibbs once we have left MTAC and he has walked over to the front elevator.
“Yeah, why?” Gibbs answers me.
“Can I come?”
“I thought you didn’t like him.”
“I don’t like working with him, he always takes all the created but he doesn’t seem to be a bad person.”
“Sure, come on.”
“Thank you Gibbs.”

“Not much of a view,” Gibbs comments when we arrive at the holding cell that is holding Fornell.
“Kind of reminds me of your basement,” Fornell informs him.
“It kind of does,” I agree with Fornell but then I pull a face at the fact that I agreed with him.
“It’s not dark enough,” Gibbs corrects us.
“Did you see the Bureau’s case against me?” Fornell questions us.
“You know that your people won’t share files with us.”
“What’s this supposed to be?” Fornell chokes out the demand of Gibbs after taking a sip of the coffee Gibbs just handed him.
“Coffee.”
“I’ll take your word for it. They found two kilos of coke and fifty grand in the counterfeit bills in my freeze.”
“If you have that much money, why the hell do you dress like a homeless, sex offender? Is the FBI really that stupid?” I cut Fornell of to inquire of that question.
“I thought the coke in ice cream quarts was a nice touch,” Fornell continues while ignoring me.
“It’s an expensive one. Jimmy Naps has gone to a lot of trouble to frame you, Tobias,” Gibbs comments.
“I know. He knew I was vulnerable.”
“Vulnerable how?” I demand of him.
“Ari.”
“What the fuck does the corps walking have to do with you?”
“You’re laying this on me, huh?” Gibbs questions Fornell while placing his hand on my shoulder to try and calm me down over the Ari situation.
“I arranged your meeting with him, Jethro. He’s our only agent inside Al Qaeda. And what did you do? You shot him!” Fornell exclaimed.
“I could have killed him.”
“You should have killed him, Kate failed, you failed. Why has no-one killed him, Gerald can’t work, and that fuck face can walk around, free,” I exclaim in anger making Gibbs gently pull me back so that my back is against his chest. He wraps his arms around my chest and holds me in place so that I can’t do anything stupid in my anger about this saturation.
“Putting a round in his shoulder helped sell his cover to Al Qaeda.”
“Did you at least shot out his shoulder the same why he did to Gerald? Blow at his ball and socket joint,” I question Gibbs but he just whisper to me that it was just a shoulder wound making me pout in disappointment.
“Why don’t you explain that to the director? He didn’t buy it when I did,” Fornell inquires of Gibbs while stopping our conversation over Ari.
“Okay, if you think it’ll do any good,” Gibbs offers to Fornell with a laugh at that very thought.
“I’m not getting out of this, am i?”
“Not alive,” I offer to him.
“You’ll get out of it. It just may not be the way you’d like,” Gibbs offer to him over the top of me making Fornell glare at us both.
“You suck at building confidence,” Fornell informs us.
“Yeah, yeah you will get out of this and go back to have males suck you off in a jiff,” I inform him sarcastically.

“Duck! What have you got for me?” Gibbs questions Ducky as we walk into autopsy.
“Ah! I’ve identified our second victim from the dental charts supplied by the FBI. His name’s Frank
Pilato,” Ducky informs us.

“Frankie P. He was to testify against Napolitano five years ago. He disappeared walking his dog on a Sunday afternoon,” Charles informs us.

“Ah, those Sunday afternoon walks can be dangers which is why I don’t do them,” I exclaim.

“You don’t walk, end of story,” Kate reminds me like I don’t already know that before turning to Ducky and adding, “Ducky, I thought you said the test indicated he was dead five or six months ago.”

“I did. Anyone care to guess how he dies?” Ducky questions us.

“I’m going to go out on a limb here and say something to do with flames,” Tony states his guess.

“And you’d be wrong, Tony his throat was slit.”

“Bled to death?” Kate guess next.

“Actually, no, Kate.”

“Working with the FBI?” I offer making Gibbs smile at my guess while Charles glares at me.

“Not directly, but indirectly I will give you.”

“Lead poisoning,” Gibbs guess to the surprise to all of us.

“Three nine millimetre slugs to be exact. Administered at close range,” Ducky informs us while holding out the bullets.

“He was kidnapped in ninety nine. Wasn’t shot until a few months ago?”

“What was he doing for all that time? Having a last supper? Reading the paper? Abducted by aliens and getting probed?” I question Ducky making everyone laugh at my options I have for the missing years.

“He was most likely executed years ago. His body has only recently been exposed to the elements. Excuse me. His blood was drained after death and his body frozen,” Ducky answers him while informing us the tragic ending to the victim.

“Jimmy Nap’s version of the ice man. They stashed the body in a cooler somewhere and then dumped it years later when everyone stopped looking,” Charles suddenly informs us.

“Yeah but why would they move the body when it has gone years without being found where it was? That doesn’t make sense to me. I mean they could have left it there indefinitely but they took the risk of moving it and getting court with a dead body or it being traced back to them,” I exclaim making everyone think about it.

“Yeesh, shot, throat slit, frozen, then burned? Jimmy Naps definitely didn’t like this dude,” Tony exclaims.

“The mafia does tend to have a flare for the dramatic, Tony,” Ducky reminds her.

“Anything on the finger parts Gunny De Luca picked up on the range?” Gibbs questions him.

“And don’t comment on the fact that he moved them without photos or you,” I add to Ducky making him smile.

“I’m good, Jethro, but not that good. I sent them up to Abby,” Ducky informs us.

“Kate, Tony,” Gibbs orders them.

“On it, boss,” Tony exclaims while leaving.

“Agent Charles, can you get me the Bureau file on Fornell?”

“I haven’t even seen it. If I get caught, I’m finished as a Federal agent,” Charles exclaim.

“Don’t get caught,” I inform him a solution for that problem.

“Kate-Kate-Kate, when I let Gibbs win, we all win. And if I beat the crap out of him, who do you think he’s going to take it out on? Oh, that’s right, all of us!” Tony exclaims as Gibbs and I walk into the lab without him noticing.

“So you took a dive for the team?” McGee questions him.

“Of course, McGee.”

“It’s good to know,” Kate states.

“It sure is. Turn around,” Gibbs states from his spot right behind Tony.

“I’m waiting for you to slap the back of my head, boss,” Tony explains to Gibbs without turning.

“I’m not going to slap your head.”
“You're not?”
“What, you don’t think I have a sense of humour? Abs, I want a DNA on the unknown blood.”
“I already started it,” Abby informs Gibbs while he walks around Tony over to her.
“Okay, what about the finger bone? Any idea how long it was on the range?” I question Abby while walking over to her.
“Well, ordinarily you can’t date bones unless it’s been in the ground long enough to soak up fluorine which is like hundreds of years. But sometimes being in a place where things get blown up all the time is a good thing. I swabbed the finger for explosive and I found trace of one. Mercury fulminate…”
“Wasn’t that completely phased out of the military by like nineteen eighty six?” I cut her off while question her in surprise.
“Correct with your random knowledge.”
“Well, that means the mafia must have been dumping bodies down there for,” Kate exclaims while trying to calculate the number of years in her head.
“At least eighteen years,” McGee cuts her off while giving us the minimal number of years.
“Thank you, McGee,” Kate exclaims at McGee in anger.
“Good job, Abs. McGee, find a way to get Little Rickey’s DNA,” Gibbs orders McGee.
“Okay,” McGee say to Gibbs while looking confused at the order. Gibbs suddenly reaches over and hit Tony on the back of the head.
“It’s no fun if you know it’s coming.”
“Ow,” Tony exclaims while hitting McGee in the back of the head after Gibbs walks away.
“What was that for?” McGee exclaims in anger and pain.
“Ah-ha! That’s for eating my sandwich.”
“I know how to get little Rickey’s DNA,” McGee exclaims while walking into the squad room where we are all working at the computers.
“Are you going to sleep with him?” Tony questions McGee.
“Because if you are, Tony and Kate can give you tips on what to do and who to enjoy it,” I add making both of them throw me a glare.
“He was hit with two paternity suits in the last five years. Beat them both with a DNA test,” McGee continues while ignoring us.
“Ha, nice try, probie. But those tests are sealed court records,” Tony laughs at McGee attempt at getting at DNA.
“Those court records are sealed, McGee,” Kate agrees with Tony, just a tiny bit nice because she fails to laugh at him.
“Hey, that’s what I just said. First!”
“But not the records from the lab that he used. It’s downtown,” McGee exclaims without caring what they just said.
“You’ll never get a judge to sign off on that warrant.”
“Maybe we don’t need one. That is, if you’re ready to become a father,” I explain to Tony slowly like he is an idiot, well more of an idiot than normal.
“I think she’s talking to you, probie.”
“We go down to the lab and see if I’m carrying your baby. It’ll be fun,” Kate exclaims once she court onto what I am implying.
“Oh! And we can steal little Rickey’s DNA test,” McGee realise.
“Photograph it for Abby,” I correct him.
“I’ll do it,” Tony suddenly exclaims.
“Why you?” McGee ask Tony in offence.
“Do you think anyone would believe you actually slept with Kate?”
“I would, I mean if she paid him,” I exclaim as Gibbs walks up to us and Kate hits me on the stomach for that comment.
“Hey, I figured out how to get little Rickey’s DNA records.”
“Oh, you mean I figured out,” McGee attempts to correct Tony.
“Hey, there’s no ‘I’ in team, McGee.”
“How?” Gibbs cuts them off.
“A paternity clinic downtown. Kate and I can have them in an hour.”
“Go get ’em. Atta boy.”
“Thank you, sir.”
“McGee,” Gibbs finishes after raising Tony’s hope.
“I got the file on Fornell,” Charles informs us while walking over to us.
“Good.”
“Not good.”
“Fornell knew Jimmy Naps was under surveillance. He can explain this,” I explain while looking at
the photo of Fornell with Jimmy.
“That photo came from an anonymous source. From the newspaper blow-up you can the date.”
“The seventeenth,” Gibbs reads over my shoulder.
“Tobias had me pull surveillance on the seventeenth.”
“Never said.”
“And you never asks.”
“But it’s the day before Agent Gera disappeared.”
“Okay, we’ve got Rickey’s DNA from the clinic. Let’s see if we match it to a sample from the crime
scene. We’re cued up. Initiating DNA match,” Abby explains to us after Tony and Kate steal the
DNA and Fornell has killed himself but we are not talking about that at all. “That’s it. It’s Rickey
Napalitano’s blood.”
“Thanks, Abs,” Gibbs says while I watch Tony and Kate who are standing around still in their
costumes from the clinic.
“We made a good couple, Kate,” Tony exclaims once Gibbs has left the lab.
“For the Jerry Springer show,” Kate states.
“Dig your threads,” Abby exclaims.
“Is there a problem, officer?” Sal, who is in the car with Rickey, questions the officer when we stop
there car.
“You’re talking to the wrong person,” The officer says to him before pointing over to Tony who is at
the passenger window while the officer is at the driver.
“Bona sera. We’ve got a warrant for your arrest, little Dicky,” Tony informs the punk.
“It’s Ricky,” Rickey exclaims in anger at Tony getting his name wrong.
“Nope, it’s murder, Dickey. Out you get,” I correct him.
“Come on,” Gibbs adds while getting Jimmy out.
“All right,” Jimmy exclaims while they both get out of the car.
“Hands on the hood, big guy. Stand up,” Tony orders them while shoving them onto the car.
“Who the hell are you guys anyway? FBI?” Rickey insults us while Gibbs and Kate search the two
punks.
“NCIS,” Kate corrects him.
“Meat inspectors?”
“Shut up, Rickey, will you? They’re Nay cops,” Jimmy orders Rickey while turning to talk to his
son.
“Turn around,” Gibbs orders Jimmy while shoving him back onto the car.
“Arrested by navy cops!? Talk about embarrassing. At least you’re hot, sweetheart. Both of you,”
Rickey exclaim while checking out both Kate and me. Kate suddenly tightly cuff Rickey, making
him exclaim in pain, “Ow! Ow! Ow! Oh, take it easy. Take it easy.”
“Now that’s embarrassing,” Tony states in amusement.
“Ow!”
“Go!” Kate orders Rickey while pulling him over to our car.
“All right, don’t worry. Don’t worry, all right, Rickey? Our lawyer will take care of this,” Jimmy calls over to his son while turning around and facing us before turning to Gibbs and asking, “AH, I don’t think we’ve met, agent…”
“Special agent… Gibbs,” Gibbs corrects him while moving in front of me so that Jimmy can’t see me.
“Special agent Gibbs. So who is it my son was supposed to have whacked?”
“I remember something about that. Something happened to him on a marine base. What was it?”
“Yeah, he got killed by a bomb,” Sal adds.
“A bomb! Yeah. Yeah, suppose… God forbid, that my son could be connected to this accident, what would you charge him with, Special agent Gibbs?”
“Manslaughter,” Gibbs states.
“Manslaughter? Manslaughter. What’s the worse you can get with that, Sally?”
“Four years. Does one,” Sal answers him.
“It might do the kid some good. Season him up a bit.”
“Jail can be a dangerous place,” I state.
“So they tell me. Yeah. You know, you remind me of somebody, Special Agent Gibbs. Somebody… who was that guy who was always talking trash. That fed…”
“Fornell,” Sal answer him again.
“Oh, yeah. Fornell. That’s it. Yeah, whatever happened to him?”
“I think he hang himself. Real sad.”
“Oh, yes. It’s terrible. All that ambition and everything. And he ends up doing the twist,” Jimmy says while laughing at Fornell’s death, but that pisses Gibbs off and he shove him back against the car in anger.
“I get the government agent on your payroll by sunup, dirt bag, or little Rickey does the twist,” Gibbs threatens him.
“Say I do this, all right? What do I get?”
“We deliver little Rickey to you, alive. The evidence against him goes missing, and you never see us again,” I inform him.
“You’d do all this just to clear Fornell’s name?”
“He was my friend,” Gibbs states before we walk away.
“Whoa. Where do you three think you’re going?” Gibbs demands of them while smiling at me.
“With you, boss,” They answer him in unison.
“I can bring one back up.”
“Well clearly you should take me, boss. Probie doesn’t know what he’s doing,” Tony exclaim.
“Oh, come on, Tony! Of course he doesn’t know what he’s doing,” Kate exclaims to Tony.
“Will all due respect, I do not think,” McGee overlaps Kate.
“Kate, with all due respect, you think you can conduct yourself in the field?” Tony demands.
“Are you kidding, Tony? Why should he bring you? You’re a total jackass. I’m the one that came up
with the idea,” Kate exclaims but after that I can’t understand anyone because they are all talking
over each other.
“Agent Charles is going,” Gibbs explains to them after piecing the air with his whistle to shut them
up.
“Me?” Charles questions in surprise.
“Are you kidding, boss? He’s kidding, right?” Tony exclaims in anger and disbelief that it’s not him.
“I don’t think he is, Tony,” McGee answers him.
“Gibbs, you need someone,” Kate begins but is cut of Tony.
“Someone who can verify the guy that Jimmy Naps turns over is FBI or Justice. Can any of you do
that?” Gibbs demands of them.
“He’s right. I know the players. I go,” Charles says making everyone return their guns to the draws
while Gibbs gets his out and gets ready to leave.
“Be careful,” I whisper to Gibbs.
“I will,” Gibbs informs me while leaving.
“Whatcha doing there, probie?” Tony questions McGee when we arrived at the squad room the next
morning to see McGee already there. The night before Charles got killed because he is the mole and
Rickey arrested for his father’s lies.
“I’m trying to find what I missed. How did Gibbs know that it was Charles?” McGee question us.
“You mean you didn’t know?” Kate questions them.
“How could you not know?” I overlap Kate.
“He didn’t know,” Tony exclaims.
“What, you knew?” McGee questions us.
“We’re seasoned investigators. McGee.”
“You have to start thinking outside the box,” Kate adds.
“Expect the unexpected.”
“Good advice, Tony,” Gibbs says while walking up behind us.
“Agent Todd, DiNozzo, McGee, Alice,” Fornell says making them stare in surprise when we walk
into the bullpen to see Fornell sitting at Gibbs desk.
“Fornell, welcome back to the world of the living. Are you leaving now? The reflection off your
head is giving me a tan, I don’t want,” I question Fornell while Tony, Kate and McGee continue to
stare at him in surprise.
“God forbid you get a tan. Yes, I’m leaving know,” Fornell answers me while walking over to the
elevator and leaving.
“About time.”
“What?” Gibbs exclaims when Tony, Kate and McGee stop staring at the elevator and turn to stare at
Gibbs in surprise without moving yet.
“How did you know about this,” Tony finally finds his voice while turning to me.
“Easy, I used my head and eyes,” I explain to him while sitting down on the desk thing behind Gibbs
desk. “Who did last night go? Jimmy lose his shit?”
“I nearly made Rickey pisses his pants,” Gibbs offers to me while the others finally move to their
desks and begin the day.
“What, was it an off day? Only nearly.”
“Can’t win them all.”
“I guess.”
“Did Gibbs tell you?” Tony demands of me while trying to work out how I know.
“Nope.”
“Why didn’t you tell me?” Kate questions me.
“I didn’t feel like it.”
“You didn’t feel like tell me that Fornell is still alive.”
“Hey, where the hell are you going?” Reyes, an FBI agent, calls out to us when we walk into the bombing sit. Once Gibbs turns to her, she adds, “Gibbs. Oh you must be Gibbs. Fornell’s mentioned you.”

“Oh, of course he did,” I state.

“Did he?” Gibbs questions her, while overlapping me.

“Mm-hmmm. Agent Lina Reyes, FBI,” Reyes introduces herself.

“Your driver has a lead foot,” I comment.

“Well, we tend to hurry when we suspect terrorism.”

“So, when we hand you a known terrorist, you let him go, but when you suspect a terrorist, you rush to it?”

“Well, so do we when the target’s a naval aviator, agent Reyes,” Gibbs declares while gently placing his hand on my shoulder when it looks like I might just hit the FBI agent.

“A lieutenant commander Micki Shields. She bombed civilians in Afghanistan,” Reyes inform us what we already know.

“Accidentally. Article thirty two hearing cleared her of all charges,” I remind her in annoyance.

“Yeah, by us. Not the psycho’s overseas issuing Jihadist threats against her and her family. Have you spoken to your director?”

“I did,” Gibbs states.

“Good, then we’re clear. FBI handles the investigation, NCIS protects the intended target.”

“We want copies of everything you find. Kate, check with commander Shields. Track down the rest of her family.”

“On it,” Kate says while walking over to the intended victim.

“DiNozzo, secure her home. I want a full surveillance perimeter. McGee, coordinate all feed with MTAC.”

“All right, boss,” McGee says while walking over to Kate with Tony.

“We’ll need copies of the surveillance tapes from the security camera,” I inform the FBI agent.

“You’ll get them,” Reyes states.


“I’ll see what I can do.”

“Do you know what terminal leave is, agent Reyes?”

“Nope.”

“It’s what commander Shields is on. In four days she’ll be a civilian, which means we wouldn’t be able to protect her anymore,” I inform her.

“That’s how long you have to solve this case,” Gibbs adds onto my sentence.

“You’re giving me a deadline?” Reyes inquires of him.

“Don’t screw up.”

“But hey if you can’t finish in that time, it’s okay,” I inform her, giving her a false sense of safety before taking it away making her glare at me by adding, “An innocent women will be killed, but that’s not on you. There is no shame in giving up. Ask Fornell, he does it every time I see him.”

“I see something,” Gibbs exclaims while watching the security video from the bombing early today.

“I think you can make a positive I.D.” Gibbs informs her.
“I’ll try start witness,” Abby says while doing just that.
“What’s that?” I question her while moving over to watch over her shoulder.
“It’s an enhancement program. We do a little homomorphic filtering… a little de-interlacing…
algorithmic enhancement… unsharp masking.”
“Yeah, you’re getting somewhere now,” Gibbs exclaims when the video zooms in on the person and
almost becomes visible but nothing to make an I.D. on.
“I am, Gibbs. Straight into a brick wall. Whoever it is, he’s blocked by the vehicle.”
“What about the reflection,” I inquire of her.
“What reflection.”
“The paint job on the next car.”
“You’re serious.”
“A reflection of whoever planted the bomb. Gibbs, Alice… you’re hired!”
“I would like for everyone to go about their normal lives as much as possible. McGee?” Gibbs says
to the intended victims’ family while we stand in their living room.
“McGee, systems check. Hey!” Tony calls over to McGee over the radio.
“Okay, camera one is up. Camera two and three, give me infrared full spectrum sweep. Camera
three. Okay punch up camera four. Camera four okay to go. All right. We’re up and operational,
Tony,” McGee calls over to Tony through the radio from MTAC.
“Boss.”
“We will try to keep a low profile, but we need your cooperation. If you see anything suspicious,
you tell us,” Gibbs softly orders the family.
“I don’t believe this. Can I sleep at Amy’s house?” Jen, the intended victim’s daughter, asks us
snidely.
“Not really a good idea. We’re trying to keep you safe and if you’re not at home something can
happen to you,” I explain to her carefully, making Jen glare at me.
“We’ll need advance notice to clear it,” Kate agrees with me making Jen storm off because she didn’t
get her own way.
“It’s all been kind of stressful,” David, the intended victim’s husband, informs us.
“I’m outta here,” Willy, the intended victim’s son, say but when everyone glares at him he hastily
adds, “It’s an expression. Bed.”
“Hey, listen, uh… you and me… we’re kind of, you know, going to be hanging,” Tony rambles to
the Willy.
“You are kidding.”
“You don’t kid. To work at NCIS you aren’t allowed to have emotions,” I explain to the boy.
“It’s going to be great,” Tony says to the boy while throwing me a glare.
“It already sucks,” Willy informs Tony.
“Hey yeah. Uh… I remember how I felt when my dog died, Willy,” McGee attempt to cheer up the
boy.
“Bite me,” Willy snaps at him.
“No thanks, we don’t want to catch anything,” I snap at the moody teenager.
“Well, I guess we’ll turn in, too. It’s been kind of stressful,” Shields, the intended victim, informs her
once her son moves away.
“Stressful,” Kate overlaps the mother.
“Goodnight.”
“Goodnight,” David say before following his wife out of the room.
“I’ll take the front door,” Kate informs Tony.
“Then I demand to take the rear,” Tony informs her.
“Well, she won’t get pregnant that way,” I inform to making him smile at me and Kate glare at me
for that comment.
“Tony?” Kate asks him in fake sweetness.
“Yes, Kate, dear,” Tony says to her.
“There’s only one bathroom downstairs.”
“And your point is?”
“The seat stays down!”
“Unless it’s up.”
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers Abby who is ringing him, “It was a bomb. An al Qaeda assassination team,” Gibbs states before hanging up the phone.
“Is Ari back?” I question him, breaking up Tony and Kate’s little verbal fight.
“I don’t know.”

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“The bomb was C-four. Mercury detonator shake charge. We ran the identifying taggants on it and it turns out that it,” Reyes informs us in the squad room the following morning.
“Stolen from a military base in Kuwait,” Gibbs cuts her off.
“And how do you know that?”
“We speak French poodle,” I inform her making her glare at me.
“It’s linked to Al Qaeda units overseas. We’ve identified three individuals in the country who may have links to their cells. Do you know how to use this?” Reyes questions Gibbs while handing him a USB.
“Sure,” Gibbs states while looking it over and then tapping it onto his desk.
“You have no idea what that is, do you?” Reyes asks Gibbs when he bites it.
“Not really.”
“Give it here,” I state while snatching it off Gibbs and walking around him to his computer and plugging in the USB. I pull up the file on it and put it up on the plasma for us to read.
“Didn’t figure you for a tech type, Gibbs. Kahlid Hassan. Suspected in planning three bombings in North Africa. He was spotted by a Virginia traffic control camera in D.C. last week. Roland Al,” Reyes ramble.
“Converted to Islam in prison.”
“And escaped a work detail three months ago,” I add.
“Well, our computer geeks suspect that he’s one of the people posting threats to commander Shields on the Islamic website. Fernando Petroya. He owns five ice cream parlours in Montgomery and Charles Country. We believe they are money laundering funds for Al Qaeda linked to the Philippines.”
“What’s his connection to commander Shields?” Gibbs questions her.
“Well, he was sighted in the vicinity of the bombing ten days ago. I mean, it could just be a coincidence.”
“Okay, bring him in for questioning.”
“I can’t do that. If I do it’ll tip him off we’re on to him. And we are hoping that he will lead us to some of his contacts in the states.”
“While you are hoping that, we have a family living in fear of being executed on their way to the mall because you want to catch a ghost,” I snap at her in anger, “What is there a promotion from catching them?”
“If we bring him in, all we’re going to get is his name and some BS cover story.”
“Not if you put him in a room with me,” Gibbs informs her.
“It’s not going to happen,” Reyes informs him before adding after a beat, “Sorry.”
“Hey, don’t forget your thingymagiggy.”
“Hold on. It needs to be dis,” Reyes starts but Gibbs just pulls out the USB and hands it to her. She finishes saying, “Connect first. You did that on purpose.”

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“If Gibbs sees me playing this,” McGee rambles to Tony over the phone while playing a video game
in MTAC that night.
“Hey, McGee!” Gibbs cuts him off while walking behind her.
“Yeah, boss?”
“Status report.”
“Girl is in her room. The parents are in the kitchen with Kate. And um… I guess you know where
the boy is.”
“Yeah,” I state while Gibbs and I stare at the video game.
“It won’t happen again.”
“I know,” Gibbs states while leading me out of MTAC.
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“What have you got for me, Abs?” Gibbs inquires of Abby while walking into the lab after talking to
McGee.
“You’ve got mail from the FBI! I think that agent has the hots for you,” Abby rambles but when
Gibbs gives her the look that says, ‘don’t go there,’ she quickly adds, “Okay, you’re right. She’s
really not your type. She sent me highly encrypted ‘J-Pegs.’ Public key’s got sixty four numbers. It
took me longer to input the password than it took the program to decrypt the cipher text. Um…
machine making pretty pictures now,” Abby continues to ramble while Gibbs phone rings.
“Yeah. Gibbs,” Gibbs answer the phone as Abby pulls up the photos from the FBI, “Yeah. He had
Commander Shields under surveillance. I want him brought in. We are running out of time here,
agent Reyes. For a few more days. Yeah, that’s what I’m afraid of.”
“Boss, I need you up here,” McGee calls out to Gibbs while Gibbs hangs up his phone.
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“Someone in the backyard. Kate and Tony are intercepting. Come on,” McGee informs us when we
get back to MTAC.
“Gibbs, Kate. False alarm,” Kate calls through the radio after clearing the house and finding that it is
the daughter’s boyfriend.
“One of the kids?” I question her.
“Daughter’s boyfriend. Probably not the first time he snuck in, but I guarantee it’s the last. Mum
packs a Glock.”
“Where is Romeo now?” Gibbs inquires of her.
“On his way home to change his pants. And Juliet is getting her butt reamed by the Capulets.”
“Roger that. Standing down. Keep us informed.”
“You got it,” Kate says before ending the radio conversation.
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“We’ve got a face, I think,” Abby informs us when we walked back into the lab after the scare.
“I’ve seen better pictures of Sasquatch,” Gibbs informs her when she pulls up a very grainy photo of
the person who planted the bomb.
“Well, the fact that it’s a reflection limits the details.”
“Well, yeah. We can see that, Abby,” I state while glaring at the unhelpful photo.
“And the face… if it is a face, it looks like it’s turned away.”
“Okay, so let’s focus on something smaller,” Gibbs softly orders her.
“Like what?”
“Like a hand. If you were placing a bomb underneath a car… your other hand would be on the side
panel.”
“Huh. That might actually work. Oh, I can see the paper now. Digital optical enhancement of
reflective surfaces with scattered refractive properties.”
“Sounds like a bestseller. I need the answer soon, Abs,” Gibbs says to her before kissing her check
and leading me out of the lab for the night. “Alice, go home and get some sleep.”
“Are you going to? Is Abby getting sleep? Tony? Kate?” I question him as we step into the elevator.
“Nope, but you need it.”
“But that is not fair on everyone else, Gibbs.”
“We’ll be fine. All we are doing is waiting for something to happen.”
“Gibbs, who is it fair if I get time to sleep when everyone else don’t?”
“Because I said it is.”
“That’s not how it works,” I state as the elevator reaches the squad room.
“Go home,” he orders me with the tone of voice that states that you can’t win the argument.
“Fine, but this is the only time,” I inform him while pointing a finger at his face. I pick up my bag and follow Gibbs out when he offers me a lift because I’m not allowed to drive yet.

“Check this out, Gibbs, Alice. We got a hand,” Abby exclaim the next morning.
“That’s a hand?” I question the blurry, grainy photo of a hand.
“That’s the best I could do. Maybe not good enough.”
“How so?” Gibbs questions her.
“Well, for some reason there’s one area that none of the enhancement programs will work on.”
“Can you tell if he’s Middle Eastern?” I question her.
“Either that or African American.”
“He’s only got three fingers,” Gibbs exclaims.
“I know. I think the program screwed up. Sorry, Gibbs.”
“He didn’t,” I exclaim.
“He didn’t what?”
“Have fingers there,” Gibbs answers her.
“So it worked?”
“Yep,” I answer her.
“Uh-huh,” Gibbs overlaps me while staring at her.
“Killer squid,” I correct her.
“Thanks, Abs,” Gibbs finishes for her while kissing her on the check again and handing her the caf-pow.
“Yep,” Abby happily says.

“Reflected image? So our bomber is Roland Allen Moore,” Reyes exclaim when we arrive in her office at the FBI.
“You don’t sound surprised, Agent Reyes,” I state.
“Well, he was a suspect,” Reyes says while opening her drawer.
“That’s true. That’s a nice office,” Gibbs states.
“Thanks.”
“Is that a surveillance request form?” I question her as she pulls it out.
“I am pretty busy here. So if you’ve got something to say, say it.”
“That’s direct. I like that. Where is he?” Gibbs questions her.
“Who?”
“Our former petty officer Roland Allan Moore?” I inquire of her.
“How would I know?”
“You’re lying. Know how I can tell? Your pupils just contracted, and you heart rate’s increasing,” Gibbs informs her.
“Maybe I’m just attracted to you.”
“Yeah, and the sky is red,” I inform her sarcastically making her glare at me.
“You’re hoping Moore will try it again. You want to roll up his entire network,” Gibbs inform her.
“So what if I am?” Reyes stares without denying it.
“My people are protecting that family. If they have to, they will die doing it.”
“If that happens… ask Fornell what he’d do,” I add the warning.

“How’s the commander?” Gibbs questions Kate when we got to the crime scene of the second attempted on her life.
“She’s fine except for a few bruises she got when she hit the deck. Tony has her and the entire clan
locked down at the house,” Kate reports.

“No more runs, Kate,” I state.

“You don’t have to tell me twice, Alice. We got lucky today. The blast mostly contained inside the vehicle. Of course there’s also the matter of the five FBI agents that Tony and I almost shot.”

“They were there for your protection,” Reyes defends her agents.

“Miss Crush-on-Gibbs what the promotion that comes from killing a military family,” I explain to Kate making Reyes glare at me, so I add, “Must be in the FBI hand book to be bitches who wants to fuck up innocent people’s lives and get them killed.”

“In unmarked vans without our knowledge?” Kate question the idiot FBI agent while ignoring me.

“Our operations need to know, Agent Todd. You didn’t,” Reyes snaps at Kate.

“Kate, next time just shot them,” I state making the agent glare at me more but I don’t care because she is just an FBI agent.

“I’ve run presidential protection details, Reyes. You don’t assign two undercover units without coordination,” Kate snaps at Reyes.

“She’s not interested in protection, Kate,” Gibbs informs her.

“You wanted them to try again.”

“The FBI thinks that the assassination team after the commander is part of a much larger operation.”

“As I said, she wants the promotion from killing this family,” I inform her.

“And we’re the bait to draw them out,” Kate exclaims in anger.

“Our intel indicates that they’re planning something catastrophic. We were hoping by observing this team, that they would lead us to the rest of the network,” Reyes defends herself.

“And if the commander and her family just happened to die in the process?” Kate demands of the FBI but she doesn’t care.

“Kate, don’t bother she wants a promotion at the cost of anything, even other people’s lives. I actually what Fornell back,” I exclaim while glaring at the FBI bitch.

“Wow. And I thought Fornell was a bastard.”

“He is, but she is a corps walking. Now are you fucking off?”

“It was your people that were lucky today, Agent Reyes,” Gibbs informs her while stepping in front of me.

“Oh yeah? How do you figure that?” Reyes question him before turning and walking away from Gibbs.

“Because my people shoots to kill,” Gibbs calls over to her before ordering Kate, “You stay here. Make sure you get copies of everything the FBI finds.”

“I don’t trust her,” Kate whispers back to him.

“Good. You’re learning.”


“She’s fine,” Kate answers her.

“Well, because I live just right over there. When I heard the explosion and I saw her carried away and I thought…”

“She was just a little dazed, that’s all.”

“Thank god. Listen, do you think it would be all right if we went over and visited?”

“The best thing you can do for her right now, ma’am, is to go him,” I politely inform her.

“I got that coffee for you, agent Reyes. It’s not as strong as mine, but if you don’t want it,” Gibbs says to the bitch while holding out a coffee for her and handing me my coffee.

“You know, I’ve been waiting twenty minutes, Gibbs. I…I am not used to waiting. I don’t like waiting,” Reyes complains.

“Seven,” I state making Gibbs give me a confused look.

“What’s seven?” Gibbs question me.

“I am counting the number of times she complain about being impatient.”

“Oh, yeah. That’s why I got coffee. Are you sure you don’t want to try it?”
“What the hell do you want?” Reyes demand without taking the coffee.
“Fornell back? No, okay we while settle on Roland Allan Moore. In my chat room. One hour,” I answers her.
“It’s not going to happen until he leads us to everyone in his cell.”
“I’ll get their names,” Gibbs promised.
“Oh, how? Are you going to force feed him your coffee?”
“You see, Tony was wrong about you. You do have a sliver of a sense of humour. Remember not to miss the six o’clock news, agent Reyes,” I snap at her.
“What the hell have you done?”
“Nothing criminal. But they find it very interesting that the FBI is using an American military family as terrorist bait.”
“You’ll blow our entire operation.”
“Not my problem. You want the promotion so bad, do what everyone else does, blow the boss. NOT PUT A FAMILY IN DANGER.”
“Sure. But I’ll also get Moore in my chat room,” Gibbs informs her while pulling me back into his chest so I don’t hit the FBI bitch.
“Look. Even an agent as arrogant as you are has to know that what you’re threating is a career ender,” Reyes informs us what she thinks she know.
“I’m not an agent, bitch, I am an agent-in-training at the moment. But hey if this job falls throw, I can always fall to the FBI,” I answer her making her glare at me.
“Only if he doesn’t talk. If he does, it’s a career maker,” Gibbs says to her while I dill his phone and place it against my head.
“Suzanne McRobert, please. Agent Todd, NCIS.”
“You’ve seen Suzanne on TV. She’s cute, blonde, does the anchor on the news,” Gibbs informs her before she hangs up my phone call to Ducky but she doesn’t know that, “That better mean we have a deal or you’re going to lose a finger.”
“If you don’t crack Moore, the appendage that I’ll cut off will mean so much more to you than a finger,” Reyes threatens him.
“I think his wife got that in the divorce so you’re a bit late,” I inform her making her glare at me but I still don’t care.
“XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX)
“I’m not going to hang myself,” Morris informs Gibbs as they walk into autopsy where I already am talking to Ducky.
“Oh, I know. That’s just what my reports going to say. Anyway. After you hang yourself your body will be autopsied here by Doctor Mallard. Hey Duck, where are you going to cut on Roland?” Gibbs questions Ducky.
“Is he going to hang himself? Did you really steal Fornell’s signature? That’s low,” I exclaim from behind them making the suspect jump in surprise.
“Uh-huh,” Gibbs answers me.
“Oh,” Ducky exclaims while walking over to a body that is laying on an autopsy bed.
“You’re not going to do this,” Morris exclaims in fear.
“He doesn’t know me very well, does he?” Gibbs questions Ducky and me.
“Obviously not. I remember one terrorist we had,” Ducky rambles.
“All right, Ducky. You promised no war stories,” I remind him.
“Oh, right. I might start with his head, Jethro. I can make a cut her behind the ear, around the back to the other on/ then I’d pull the skin down over your face so I can take the Striker saw to take the top of your skull off,” Ducky explains while pointing to the suspect’s head showing him where he is going to cut.
“Get away from me,” Morris yells while stepping away from Ducky making Gibbs and I laugh at his fear.
“I don’t think he wants you to start there, Duck,” Gibbs informs Ducky while I look sad.
“Oh no matter. I can always use a ‘Y’ cut to begin with. Let me show you. It’s quite simple, really.
We take the skull then we cut here and here. Here we go. And then we make a cut all the way down
to just above the pubic bone. Now we separate the skin from the muscle and the tissue. And then we
take these and we cut them,” Ducky says while gently cutting open the poor corpse on the table and
then I hand him the rib cutters, they look like tree cutters. Ducky begins to cut the ribs out and
placing them on the table beside the autopsy table, while talking to the next victim, the living victim,
“Once I’ve opened you up… then we take this and we put it down here. And then I can take out
your heart… what do you know? And then we go up to the trachea and pull it out… along with your
tongue,” Ducky says while pulling out said parts.

“The FBI announces the arrest of four alleged terrorists today. They are believed to be an Al Qaeda
cell responsible for the bombing of Navy Lieutenant Commander Micki Shield’s car at a Tacoma
Park supermarket on Wednesday, and a second car bombing yesterday on a street where she was
jogging. An FBI spokesperson said a suspect they had under surveillance led them to a Silver Spring
apartment where they captured the entire cell without firing a shot. Lieutenant Commander Shields
was the Naval aviator,” Suzanne says on the TV until Shields turns it off in the middle of the
sentence.

“The news is really depressing these days,” Shields states.

“You have no idea, Commander Shields,” Tony complains because we aren’t even mentioned.

“Actually not Commander anymore. Terminal leave is up. I am just Mrs. Micki Shields now. I kind
of like the sound of that.”

“That’s good,” David comments making us smile at the couple who is getting back together.

“Are we going to let these people get on with their lives, or are we going to stand here and stare them
to death?” Gibbs questions us.

“The equipment is loaded and stored. Ready to move, boss,” McGee informs Gibbs.

“Well, let’s move, McGee,” I snap at him.

“If you tell anyone where you got it, I will deny it under oath,” Kate informs Jen while handing her a
piece of paper.

“A blank hall pass,” Jen exclaims in surprise.

“Signed by the principal.”

“Undated.”

“Erasable ink is the key. It’s always worked for me.”

“Hey! Well, here you go,” Tony says while handing Willy a NCIS hat.

“Thanks,” Willy says.

“Yeah, I wouldn’t wear it unless I had to. Cool. If there’s anything you can think of.”

“Shades.”

“What?”

“I like your sunglasses.”

“Yeah, but that’s not surprising because they’re super cool, Willy. But you see, the thing about these
is are… these are really grown up shades,” Tony explains while handing over the shades.

“We’re out of here,” Gibbs orders them.

“Thanks! Sweet!” Willy exclaims while putting on the shades.

“Polarized lenses. Impact protected. Raked-back curvature. They were special order, boss,” Tony
complains about the sunglasses he gave to Willy.

“I never special order,” Gibbs answers her.


“There’s nothing funny about this, McGee. And what part of this conversation is about you
anyway?” Tony snaps at McGee.

“What? You the only one allowed to kiss Gibbs ass?” I question Tony.

“Only the part about special ordering,” McGee answers Tony who is glaring at me.

“I always special order. It’s a bright day out today,” Kate exclaims while putting on her sunglasses.

“Yeah, Abs,” Gibbs answers his phone, “Amateur night,” Gibbs hangs up the phone and quickly
turns the car around while the tires screech.  
“Anything we should know, Boss?” Tony inquires of Gibbs while we all have to hold on.  
“The second bomb wasn’t Al Qaeda. Somebody else wants the commander dead.”

There is shouting in the house as I ring the doorbell but no one answers the phone. I hit the doorbell a second time, we suddenly hear gunfire from inside. Gibbs kicks the door in and we all run in with our guns ready to shot if need-be.

“It was self-defence. She was just trying to protect herself,” David exclaims when we arrive in the room where Greta is dead on the ground and Shields has a gun pointed at her.

“At least this time it wasn’t an innocent civilian,” Shields exclaim in a little bit of shock.

“Actually, I did special order once,” McGee exclaims in the silent car making Tony and I chuckle at him.

“I have never special ordered. It is a waste of time, I like to see the item before I buy it,” I exclaim to them.

“You have never special ordered?” Tony questions me.

“Nope.”
“The Washington Ballet is totally sold out,” McGee informs Tony while Kate and I walk into the squad room.
“You’re kidding!” Tony exclaims in anger.
“People were backed up trying to hack into the box office.”
“Ah, I can’t believe that!”
“Since when are you interested in a ballet?” Kate questions Tony.
“Oh, uh… since about an hour ago,” Tony answers her.
“Let me guess. The cashier at the bakery that you buy your early death, was wearing leg warmers,” I inquire of him.
“How do you know that?”
“Living with Kate helps me spot the truth.”
“Oh hey, there’s another ballet in town, DiNozzo. I can get you two front row easy,” McGee cuts in before anyone can comment on my comment.
“Really? What ballet?” Tony demands of her.
“The National.”
“Oh. Only…”
“Only what?”
The nation…”
“Is not ours,” Kate and I inform Tony.
“Surinam.”
“Surinam? The national ballet of Surinam… how good can that be?” Tony question of McGee.
“Depends how much you like her buns, Tony,” Kate answers him.
“DiNozzo, make Mister Yost here comfortable,” Gibbs order Tony while leading a little old man into the squad room.
“You want to make me comfortable?” Yost question Gibbs in surprise while Tony gives up his chair for the old man.
“Mm-hmm,” Tony answers him.
“Slap a pair of handcuffs on me.”
“How about something else?”
“Any good at foot massages?”
“Kate. Alice. McGee,” Gibbs calls over to us while walking away from her.
“Here, let me get that for you,” Tony says to Yost but I can’t see what he is talking about because I am following Gibbs away.
“I found him downstairs. He claims to have murdered a Marine with this forty-five,” Gibbs informs us while showing us a gun in a plastic bag.
“Do you believe him?” Kate questions Gibbs.
“He’s a little foggy on the where and when, but he’s pretty adamant he did it.”
“Gibbs… we’re not going to investigate this?”
“Why? Do you think that innocent old man is lying about killing a man? What would he get from that?” I demand of Kate making her roll her eyes at me.
“Nah,” Gibbs answers her.
“Good,” Kate exclaims while ignoring me.
“We’re just going to humour him. McGee, says he’s been reporting this to nine-one-one, can’t get anybody to believe him.”
“Trace the call. I want to hear one of them.”
“On it.”
“Kate, he’s a former Marine. Probably W-W-Two. Corporal Ernest Yost. Dig up his S.R.B.”
“You got a Social Security number?” Kate inquires of Gibbs.
“Well Kate, you can ask him.”
“Gibbs, I doubt that he could remember his shoe size.”
“Kate watch and learn,” I inform her before calling over to Yost, “Corporal Yost!”
“Yo!” Yost shouts back at me.
“Serial number!”
“Three-three-zero-zero-nine-zero, ma’am!”
“Oh you can just look him up under Medal of honour recipients,” Gibbs adds.
“He won the Medal of honour?” Kate asks in surprise.
“You don’t win the Medal of Honour, Kate. You’re awarded it for conspicuous gallantry above and
beyond the call of duty. But if you bothered to ask the recipients, they say the men who deserve it,
ever came home,” I snap at Kate for her lack of knowledge.
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“What do we have here, Gibbs?” Abby inquires of Gibbs as he hands her the gun.
“Murder weapon,” Gibbs answers her.
“Cold case?”
“Icicles,” I inform her.
“Hmm. It’s rust from potassium chlorate in the powder mix.”
“Hasn’t been fired recently,” Gibbs inquires of her without asking while she looks over the gun.
“They didn’t even use this kind of ammo when you were in the Marines, Gibbs. Check out the
muzzle end of the slide. See that colouring mismatched? That’s from hardening after the finish was
applied. This weapon is circa early nineteen forties,” Abby explains to Gibbs with a smile.
“A year or two before I joined the corps,” Gibbs informs her without giving the exact year that he
joined, while Abby scraps the metal, resulting in the metal on metal sound.
“Dirt?” I question her.
“Looks like black sand,” Abby corrects me.
“Trace its origin,” Gibbs orders her.
“Don’t I always? Hey Gibbs, are you going to tell me what this is about?”
“Pissing off Kate?” I question her.
“What? You need help with that?”
“A marine who doesn’t clean his weapon after firing it,” Gibbs informs her while ignoring my
suggestion because he knows I while piss of Kate anyway.
“Wow. Things must be really slow upstairs.”
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“I never said I shot him. I beat him to death with it. Over the head,” Yost informs us when Gibbs
questions him about his gun’s condition.
“My buddy. Corporal Wade Kean.”
“Why?”
“Why?”
“Why would you kill your buddy? Please, we need to understand the murder so we know how to
charge you,” I offer to him while Gibbs glares at him.
“I don’t think he believes me, kid,” Yost says to us while looking at Gibbs.
“Me either,” Tony informs him.
“Well, what do you know? You weren’t even a gleam in your old man’s eye.”
“Mister Yost,” Gibbs snaps.
“Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know, I know. Why? Is that all he’s gonna ask me?”
“Until you ask him, to his satisfaction. He’s a bloodhound,” I inform him.
“Pretty much ‘til he gets an answer,” Tony agrees with me.
“All right. You want an answer? I’ll give you an answer,” Yost informs Gibbs but doesn’t say
anything. As the time drags on we begin to this he isn’t going to tell us but finally he informs us, “I
don’t know why.”
“You don’t know why?” Gibbs demands of him.
“No.”
Okay, then I don’t believe you killed him, Master Yost,” I inform him.
“Why won’t anybody believe me? I killed him! I smashed him over the head. I… beat his brains in! Blood was coming out of his brain!” Yost yells out me while standing up suddenly.
“Where’s me forty five?!” Yost demands before yelling in fear, “Where’s my forty five?! I had it when I came in here.”
“We have your forty five, you gave it to Gibbs when you got here,” I inform him softly making him calm down.
“Good. You see, that’s evidence. That’ll prove that i… that i…”
“Tony, get him a drink of water,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“All right. Come with me, Mister Yost. The water cooler’s right over here,” Tony says to Yost.
“It’s not a water cool. It’s called a scuttle butt. How long have you been in the corps, kid?” Yost demands of Tony.
“Since I met Gibbs. This way,” Tony says while leading Yost away.
“Boss, Winchester, Virginia, P.D. got seven nine-one-one calls from Yost during the past eleven days,” McGee informs us.
“Let me hear the last one,” Gibbs orders him.
“Nine-one-one,” The 911 operator says on the recording.
“Hi, got a pencil and paper ready?” Yost asks her on the recording two.
“Sir, I have a computer. What is the emergency you wish to report?”
“Well there’s a dead man, well, actually it’s not an emergency to him anymore. He’s dead. The emergence is for me. See, it’s getting late in the day, very late.”
“Mister Yost, is this you again…”
“I heard enough,” Gibbs says.
“That’s so sad. He’s confused and alone and scared and doesn’t know what to do,” I sadly say to McGee and Gibbs.
“The police investigated a couple times, found him to be inebriated and that he started making the calls when his wife passed away,” McGee reports to Gibbs while ignoring me.
“Yeah,” Gibbs states.
“His citation of conspicuous gallantry above and beyond the call of duty,” Kate informs us while walking into the squad room. She continues to report to us by reading the report she pulled,
“Corporal Ernest Yost, U.S. Marine Corps, First Battalion, Twenty Eighth Marine, Fifth Marine Division at Iwo Jima, Volcano Island, Four March, Nineteen forty-five. In terrain studded with caves and ravines, Corporal Yost was standing point forward of outline when he spotted Japanese troops attempting to infiltrate under the cover of darkness. He immediately waged a fierce battle during which a grenade gravely wound his right hand and fractured his thigh. Near exhaustion from profuse bleeding, he continued to defend his forward position, engaging in hand-to-hand combat when he was out of ammunition. At dawn, Corporal Yost was found amid the bodies of twenty six Japanese soldiers he had killed in his self-sacrificing defence of his forward position.”
“What?” Yost asks as he walks back into the squad room and we all stare at him.
“We just heard about you wife, sir. I am so sorry, sir,” I answer him.
“We just heard about your wife, mister Yost. You have my sympathies, sir,” Gibbs overlaps me.
“Thank you. Buried her two weeks ago. Ball’s Bluff National Cemetery. We were married fifty eight years. Dorothy… she was a peach,” Yost informs us before he begins to cry in pain from his lose, “She was… a peach. Now can we get on with this?!?”
“You’re not in custody, Mister Yost.”
“Now don’t say that, Agent Gibbs. Didn’t get anything for dinner tonight.”
“Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone.
“I’d love to buy you dinner, Mister Yost,” Kate offers.
“You would?” Yost asks in surprise.
“Me, too,” McGee cuts in.
“She asked first.”
“We don’t know yet! Videoconference. Five minutes,” Gibbs says while hanging up his phone and
turning to Tony and orders him, “DiNozzo, entertain Mister Yost a little while longer.”
“Does that mean you’re going to hold me?”
“No!”
“Don’t worry about him, his a marine,” I explain to Yost while Gibbs walks away, before adding,
“Know, I believe Kate owes you and me a meal.”
“Why do I owe you one?” Kate demands of me.
“Because I am your favourite sister.”
“No you’re not.”
“And Gibbs let me write and read your yearly status report, so if you’re not nice to me, you have to
work with Miss Crush-on-Gibbs bitch and Fornell the bowling-ball. And I’m your favourite sister.”
“You are not my favourite sister.”
“You’re right… Tony is.”
“Hey, don’t bring me into this,” Tony cuts in before adding, “I am not a girl.”
“No yet.”
“You are impossible,” Kate exclaim while pulling up a takeout website to order for dinner.
“Statement of Mister Ernie Yost, medal of honour recipient, NCIS Special Agent L. Jethro Gibbs,”
Gibbs says to the recorder in the integration room while I watch from observation with Tony and
Ducky.
“Jethro. I used to know a ballplayer named Jethro. Negro League,” Yost informs Gibbs.
“Do you understand your rights?”
“Oh, sure. Sure, yeah. That Italian kid read them to me De… Di…”
“DiNozzo.”
“Tony. He’d make a heck of a ballplayer.”
“Promised me a tryout. Said he used to be a scout for the Senators,” Tony informs us.
“How sad. You’re obviously too old to be a professional ballplayer,” Ducky states.
“And unfit,” I add.
“Now like I told you I killed my best friend… wade,” Yost continues to inform Gibbs without a care
in the world about the fact that he is talking about killing his friend.
“Why?” Gibbs asks him again.
“Now that again?”
“If you want me to charge you.”
“You know, wade could do a kip. A kip up. He’d lay on his back on the barracks deck. And in one
move, he’s jerk his body and land on his feet. Have you ever seen anybody do anything like that,
huh? Well, you wouldn’t forget. I got this Metro card here. It’s got ten rides left. Do you want it?”
Yost offers Gibbs the card.
“No, thanks.”
“Yeah, it seems silly. Wade. You know, all I remember is killing him.”
“All right, mister Yost. Tony can give you a ride home,” Gibbs says to Yost when Yost stops talking
for a long while.
“Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I’m trying to remember. You know, I know you need to know why.”
“That would be nice.”
“You know I… you know I think… I think… it was him or me. Yeah. Yeah, that’s it. Him or me. I
took this pistol… and I smashed his brains in Wade… I smashed. I smashed his brains in! We’re all
covered with blood!”
“You don’t have to remember any more, Mister Yost. Take a deep breath. Breathe. Breathe,” Gibbs
orders Yost who is hyperventilating making Tony and I run into the room.
“Phew. It smells like rotten eggs in here,” Yost exclaims.
“Tony, get Mister Yost some air.”
“Well?” Gibbs demands of Ducky once we walk into the corridor and Yost is out of hearing range.
“I’m a medical examiner, not a psychiatrist,” Ducky reminds Gibbs.
“I won’t sue you, Duck.”
“Well, he reminds me of my great uncle William in Bristol. We’d visit every Christmas. He was always apologizing for sitting naked at the dinner table.”
“He wasn’t naked, right?” I ask Ducky.
“No. Aunt Gertrude was. I’m sorry, Gibbs. My point is my uncle was a little dotty as you mister Yost,” Ducky explains when Gibbs stares at him for the unhelpful story.
“Ducky, wat do you think he smelled in there?”
“I hesitate to ask.”
“Nothing.”
“It was in his mind. He was back in Iwo. The sulfur island,” Gibbs informs Ducky.
“Sulfur smells like rotten eggs,” Ducky states.
“Good news, I think,” Kate exclaims while running up to us.
“It’s not good news if you have to think about it.”
“Ducky, you’re talking to Kate, she has nothing to think with so she has to think if coffee is ‘good’” I inform Ducky while using my fingers, like bunny ears, around the word, ‘good.’
“‘Corporal Wade Kean was killed in action on Iwo Jima on March third, nineteen forty five according to the marine corps casualty list,” Kate reports while glaring at me.
“That’s the day before Yost was cited for gallantry,” Ducky states.
“That means he didn’t kill him, right?”
“If no one witnessed the murder Yost alleges committing, they’d assumed that Corporal Kean was killed by the Japanese. I’m sorry, Kate. It doesn’t really prove anything except a braver marine died.”
“Ducky, say Yost’s best friend was killed in action. What’s he feel?” Gibbs questions Ducky.
“Pain. Anger. Relief.”
“In other word, survivor’s guilt. He’s glad it’s not him. He hates himself for that feeling,” I say while catching onto what Gibbs is thinking.
“ Exactly.”
“The next night Yost is in hand-to-hand combat,” Gibbs continues.
“So he confused killing a Japanese soldier with killing his friend,” Kate asks us in confusion.
“This all started when his wife died.”
“Survivor’s guilt again, Ducky?” I asks Ducky.
“No wait, wait, wait. You’re onto something there. But how do you prove it to him?” Ducky asks us.
“Kate, prepare an affidavit to exhume the body of marine corporal Wade Kean,” Gibbs orders her.
“At Iwo Jima?” Kate asks him.
“He’s not in Iwo Jima. We gave the island back to Japan in sixty eight. Every marine buried there was brought home and giving a private final resting place,” I explain to her.
“You find him. Dig him up,” Gibbs orders.
“Which is wrong, why can’t the poor man to lay in peace. He died a hero but we keep digging him up.”
“Yeah, I thought it might help,” McGee informs us proudly.
“Good thought. When he wakes up, take him home,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“Will do,” Tony answers him.
“Stay with him. I don’t want him to be alone.”
“Oh, boss! I’ve got tickets to the National Ballet tonight.”
“The National Ballet?”
“Yeah, and the tickets are really hard to get. Tell him, McGee.”
“Um… well,” McGee stutters out again.
“What nation?” Gibbs demands.
“Not ours,” I offer.
“It starts with an ‘S’” Tony answers Gibbs.

“It can’t be a coincidence. Yost’s wife is buried in the same cemetery as Corporal Kean,” I state while walking through the cemetery with Gibbs, and a couple of other people.
“Well, Mister Yost must have requested the plot for he and his wife decades ago to be buried there. I mean this section of the cemetery has been filled since the seventies,” Superintendent informs us without caring.

“Left, right. Left! Left, right, left! Left, right left!” Griffith calls out to the marines following him, “Detail halt! Left face!” He then turns to Gibbs and says, “Marine burial detail present as requested, special agent Gibbs.”

“Thank you, colonel. Now we’re ready,” Gibbs says as a tractor begins to dig up the poor dead marine.

“This is still wrong. After this, the poor man better be left to rest in peace,” I snap making Gibbs and the marines agree with me.

“Skeletal remains as expected. They were buried only in a canvas bag or poncho. Twenty years in sulfuric soil takes its toll,” Ducky informs us when we arrive with the poor lost soul that we just dug up for the second time after his death.

“What’s that in his teeth?” Kate asks us while pointing to the rusty metal between his teeth.
“Dog tags,” Gibbs answers her.
“When you were killed in action, one of your dog tags was inserted between your teeth and your lower jaw was slammed shut locking it in place so the body could always be identified,” I continue for Gibbs.

“Oh, god!” Kate exclaims.

“Traumatized bilateral amputation of the legs,” Ducky informs us while pointing to the missing legs of the poor soul.
“Artillery shell?”
“Land mine,” Gibbs corrects her before turning to Ducky and adding, “Check the top of the skull, Ducky. Here.”

“Please, don’t tell us it matches,” I beg of Ducky after he places the gun into the skull concussion.
“I’m afraid there is a blunt force fracture,” Ducky informs us making me close my eyes in pain for the poor, confused, old man.

“You’ve got to do it,” Gibbs says to Ducky.

“Yost confessed in a letter to SECNAV. He surrendered the murder weapon. Your own medical examiner matched it to the tool mark on the victim’s skull fracture. What more do you want?” Faith, the person who Gibbs spoke to earlier in a video-call, questions us snidely in the squad room the next morning.

“Motive,” Gibbs answers her.
“I don’t need a motive to prosecute.”
“We do,” I snap at her and add, “Why do you want to imprison a little old man? Are you that selfish? He. Is. Innocent.”

“McGee,” Gibbs says while pulling me away from bitch 2.0, McGee clicks on his computer and plays a video.

“I pick up this pistol and I hit him with it. I smashed his brain in! Wade. I smashed his brain in… I smashed his brains in! We were all covered with blood!” Yost rambles on the recording.
“Look at him, commander. He’s living in agony over something he didn’t do,” I snap at the agent while pointing to the paused of the confused old man.
“How do you know?” Faith demands of me.
“Because I have spoken to the man, he is confused and alone and scared. Maybe you shouldn’t convict some without even meeting me.”
“Have you ever been in combat?” Gibbs demands of her while pulling me back into his chest and holding me in place so I don’t hurt the agent.
“No,” Faith states.
“The only one you depend on is the buddy next to you. He’d closer to you than your brother. Why would you smash his head in?”
“God only knows.”
“Well, let’s go and inquire of God why Yost would kill his friend,” I state.
“Well then he had better tell me… because I don’t understand, and neither does Yost,” Gibbs overlaps me.
“I’m tired of arguing with you, Gibbs. Deliver Yost to the Quantico brig,” Faith orders us but Gibbs cuts him off.
“I can’t do that.”
“Damn it, Gibbs. Do you think I want to incarcerate an eighty two year old man? I’m following the SECNAV’s direct orders. He said investigate. You did, and found enough evidence to hold him over for a court martial. Now take him into custody.”
“He said can’t… not wouldn’t. Are you stupid as well as a bitch?” I demand of her.
“Please don’t insult me by telling me he escaped.”
“The older they are, the sneakier they are,” Gibbs informs her.
“Yost complained of a weak bladder. He had to use the restroom every ten minutes. We gave up escorting him and one time he just didn’t come back,” Kate explains Gibbs lie in a believable way.
“We found a window open. He must have shimmied down the drain pipe,” McGee adds next.
“I’d like to have seen that,” Faith states without believing us.
“We think the weak bladder was a trick to get us to let down our guard,” I state while walking over to Gibbs desk with him. I sit on the desk behind his desk while he sits in the chair.
“So what do we do?”
“Find every living marine who served with Yost on Iwo Jima,” Gibbs orders her.
“If there is one,” Kate says but after Gibbs glares at her, she turns to do it while adding, “Right.”
“McGee.”
“Boss?” McGee says while awaiting his order.
“I want you and Abby to reconstruct the battle. That Marine documentary you downloaded is a start.
I want to follow corporals Yost and Kean minute by minute. From D-Day until Kean was killed and Yost was evacuated.”
“You got it, boss.”
“I want it so real I can smell the sulfur.”
Yeah.”

“Iwo Jima, five miles long half of that in width. Twenty seven thousand Japanese dug in so deep, that ten weeks of bombardment couldn’t touch them,” Abby informs us when we arrive in the lab while showing us the reconstruction.

“One out of every three marines on Iwo Jima was a casualty,” McGee continues.

“The Japanese had eight hundred pill boxes and three miles of tunnels on that tiny little island.”

“The marines hoped to take Mount Suribachi on the first day.”

“It took five before the famous flag-raising. And then the battle went on for about a month after that.”

“It was actually the second flag to be raised. The first was to small to be seen by all the maines.”

“Hey, I am only interested in two marines, corporals Yost and Kean,” Gibbs cuts them off.

“Gibbs, we’re trying to give you a little background here,” Abby informs him.

“I got that, Abby, at Parris Island.”

“Okay. D-day. Zero nine hundred. Blue beach one. Corporals Yost and Kean land with the Twenty-fifth Regimen of the fourth division. They’re about to take the airfield with the third division, while the fifth division takes Suribachi and advances up the west coast.”

“First Airfield falls on D-Day and they sweep up the east shore the sulfur quarry and airfield two,” McGee continues for Abby.

“Estimates were five days, ten max.”

“Over two weeks later they are still trying to take that second airfield.”

“Corporal Kean’s body was found here, Turkey Knob.”

“The next night Yost was cited for the Medal of Honour here about five hundred yards away.”

“What’s this here?” I ask them while pointing to a spot on their map they are using to tell the story.

“That’s the gap between the fourth and third division lines. The night that Corporal Kean died, the Japanese had amassed several hundred troops for a banzai charge,” Abby answers me.

“They were getting desperate. See, up until then they’d only fought from inside their bunkers,” McGee continues for her again.

“Kean was killed here below the cave mouth,” Gibbs states.

“Within spitting distance,” Abby answers him.

“He stepped on a landmine. He’d blown off both his legs. He was in severe pain. Most likely screaming in pain,” I inform them.

“This ditch runs north where the Japanese were amassing. They had to pass within yards of Kean and Yost,” Gibbs takes over for me.

“You think… Yost hit him in the head to keep him quiet?” Kate asks us in surprise.

“Well, that’s got to be it! He had no reason to kill him. He was his buddy!”

“I don’t believe it,” Gibbs states when Tony informs us of the photo of Wade and Dorothy at senior prom when he arrived at the squad room without Yost who is talking to other people.

“It doesn’t matter, Boss. He does,” Tony responds.

“Commander Coleman is going to use this to put Yost away for the rest of his life,” Kate says.

“Do we have to tell her?”

“Well, no, special agent DiNozzo. Here at NCIS we just report evidence we like,” Gibbs snaps at Tony.

“You know, Gibbs, it doesn’t change your theory. Corporal Kean was in pain from his wounds. Yost knocked him out to keep his cries from alerting passing Japanese. So over the years Yost begins questioning himself. Did he have to hit him that hard to silence him? Or did he do it to get the woman that they both loved?” Kate attempts to calm Gibbs down while getting us back on track.

“Well, I traced down private Bellows. He was in Vegas last month playing blackjack. Double
downed on two aces, caught two queens. Reached for his chips and dropped dead. Billows’ death makes Yost the last surviving marine from his unit on Iwo,” McGee informs us.

“That makes it worse, he has no one to talk to who knows what it was like, what happen. He is totally alone,” I sadly say.

“It’s just so hard to believe that there’s nobody left on the planet who was there that night,” Kate says. The second Kate is finished Gibbs storms off.

“Do you guys like Benny Goodman? I’m an Artie Shaw man myself. Now don’t get me wrong. Benny Goodman was great. But Artie Shaw… when he lifted that clarinet. Boy, did we argue about that! Wade loved Goodman. Me? Artie Shaw any day. Do you dance?” Yost rambles while walking into the squad room.

“Yes, sure!” Kate say making Yost smile in happens and pull her into a dance while he sings the song in his head.

“When they begin the beguine
It brings back the sound of music so tender
It brings back a memory evergreen,” Yost sings before humming for a bit, “…orchestra’s playing…” and more humming.

“Where’s Gibbs?!” Faith demands when she walks into the room.

“Good afternoon to you, too, Commander Coleman,” Tony says with a smile.

“He was to deliver Corporal Yost to me.”

“Present and accounted for, sir!” Yost says while standing to attention.

“…It’s now eight hundred. You’re Ernest Yost?”

“Yes, Ma’am.”

“Nope, that’s my mother. She gets confused,” I answer her making her glare at me but I just grin at her.

“This is Lieutenant Commander Coleman, Ernie. JAG corps. She’s here to uh… arrest you,” Tony introduce Yost to the bitch agent.

“I can’t tell you how much I appreciate this, commander,” Yost states.

“What’s with the Olsen twins?”

“They’re here to escort the accused to Quantico,” Faith informs us.

“Well, it’s about time,” Yost exclaims in happiness that he is finally getting hold accountable for what he thinks he did to his friend.

“We’ll deliver him,” Kate states while we make a human wall between the agents and Yost.

“You’ve had two days to do that,” Yost says while the marines salute Yost before turning to arrest him but we won’t let them even close.

“Right on time, commander,” Gibbs says while walking us.

“I’m on time? You’re the one who failed to deliver the accused to me at zero hundred.”

“Gibbs, tell this… this person that it can’t have my mother,” I exclaim making Faith glare at me for calling her an ‘it.’

“I’ve got a witness. And it wouldn’t take your mother,” Gibbs informs her.

“Witness to what?” Faith question him while glaring at me harder.

“What happened the night Corporal Kean died.”

“You couldn’t have! I mean, you could have. Obviously you did. Did I miss someone in his unit?”

“No, all Marines are deceased.”

“Ernie’s alive,” I remind her.

“Gibbs,” Faith snaps at him.

“Commander, there were more than marines in Iwo Jima. There were more than twenty thousand Japanese,” Gibbs reminds her.

“They were all killed.”

“Not all. A few were taken prisoner. Some never returned to Japan.”

“You found a Japanese soldier who fought on Iwo Jima?”

“A Japanese Lieutenant right in this District as it so happens.”
As it so happens."

“Yes.”

“And where is this miraculous find?”

“Well, he went to the bathroom on the way. He should be here any,” I inform her as a Japanese man walks into the squad room.


“You were an Imperial Army Lieutenant?” Faith questions Yoshida.

“Army of Emperor… lieutenant. Hai,” Yoshida answers her with a nod at the end.

“Taken prisoner by marines on Iwo Jima?”

“Marine… to…”

“English obviously isn’t his thing,” I cut of the agent from glaring at Yoshida.

“Gibbs. I don’t know what you’re trying to do,” Faith snaps at Gibbs while ignoring me again.

“Trying to get the truth, Faith,” Gibbs snaps at her calmly.

“You’re only delaying the inevitable,” Faith informs Gibbs after a very long moment of her just staring at Gibbs.

“All we have to lose is a little time,” I state and after a moment of silence I add, “And your pride.”

“Okay, I will give you a little time.”

“What’s Gibbs’ doing?” Faith snaps at us in the observation room, watching Gibbs and Yost integration. Gibbs is lighting and blowing out matches with the lights dimmed.

“He’s creating the smell of sulfur,” Ducky informs her.

“Corporal Yost,” Gibbs says to him in interrogation.

“Sir!” Yost responds.

“Iwo Jima. Hill three Eighty-two. The meat grinder.”

“Start the tape,” Tony orders the technician in the observation to begin the move McGee downloaded earlier.

“Five hundred landing craft in ten waves advance on three thousand yards of beach,” the Narrator says on the video with explosions in the background of the video as Gibbs lights and blows out another match.


“I killed him,” Yost informs him without thought on the matter.

“He stepped on a mine.”

“Blew his legs off. But I killed him,” Yost informs Gibbs as Gibbs lights and blowing it out.

“Tonight we kill Marines! Their blood will honour us!” Yoshida shouts in Japanese over the explosions over the map. Gibbs lights another match. “Quite!”

“Shh!” Yost calls out to the flashback that he is living.

“I hear something!” Yoshida continues to yell in Japanese.

“Shh! Shh! Sorry, Wade! I’m sorry. I’m sorry. I’m sorry,” Yost cries making me leave the room and rush into the poor man and pulling him into a tight hug. I let him cry onto my shoulder in pain for what we had to make him remember, something that should have stayed dead in the past.

“You’re going to be alright,” I whisper to him softly while rubbing his back to help calm him down.

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world like a lost little boy looking for his mother.
“You met Dorothy in Hawaii after you were wounded on Guadalcanal.”
“Yes. She was a Navy nurse.”
“You decide to get married before you shipped off to Iwo?”
“Yeah, I told you. It was love at first sight. We were going to get hitched when one of us was discharged.”
“Who was going to be your best man?” I ask, catching onto what Gibbs is doing.
“That was going to be Wade. He was,” Yost answers without thought before seeing our smile and catching onto what we are saying and thinks for a moment before adding, “I ask Wade! He knew I was going to marry Dorothy! He said no hard feelings. He thought we were meant for each other.”
“Ernie, you did what you did to save the rest of your patrol. No other reason. Come on, corporal. Let a gunny buy you dinner,” Gibbs says while collecting his gear to leave for the night.
“You were never an officer?”
“Oh hell no!”
“I knew there was something about you I liked,” Yost says as they leave. I sit down at Gibbs desk and write up the file for this strange case, but unlike many cases, it doesn’t end with a dead or arrest. Just an old man with closure on an old case.
Heart Break

I apology for not posting last week, work get the best of me and I ran out of time. I would like to thank everyone who comments, favourite and followed this story. I am glade that some many people like it, I was afraid that it wasn’t any good, because I have been told that I am a bad writer before.

“Where were you?” I hissed at Kate when I arrived at the hospital to see that Kate is already there. “Ho! You got here quick. Where were you?” Tony ask Kate before she can answer me. “Home asleep,” Kate answer us. “Asleep maybe, unlikely,” I state. “But not home. I got you on your cell,” Tony finishes for me while I glare at Kate. “Drop it, DiNozzo, Alice,” Kate snaps. “Do not make this a challenge, Kate. I will find out. Oh, boy,” Tony calls out to Kate while Gibbs arrives at the hospital with the redhead again. “See ya,” Gibbs says to her while kissing her check. “Looks like you and I were the only ones flying solo last night, McGee,” Tony informs McGee and me.”

“Speak for yourself,” McGee says before turning to Gibbs and saying, “Morning, Boss.” “Where?” Gibbs question us about the crime scene. “First floor. A-wing,” Kate informs him while returning to the group. “Some kind of explosion. Guy went up in flames,” Tony continues to report to Gibbs. “Name?” I ask Tony as we walk into the hospital corridor. “Commander Michael Dornan, safety officer on the Kennedy.” “Which just got back from the Gulf,” Gibbs states his question. “Yeah, Friday. He’d been complaining of chest pains. Had open heart surgery four days ago. The doctor who led the team that operated on him is on the way in.”

“I’ll talk to him.” “That would be a ‘her’, boss. Commander Janice Byers,” Tony say as we walk into the crime scene in the hospital room, “Oh! That had to hurt.” “What started the fire, Ducky?” I ask Ducky while looking into the burnt out room. “The source of the conflagration appears to be internal. The majority of the damage is confined to the torso,” Ducky answers me. “He was receiving oxygen through a nasal cannula,” Kate informs Ducky. “Still would have needed a source of ignition, and I seriously doubt it could have caused this kind of damage.”

“Could he have been smoking in bed?” “Only you do that Kate,” I snap at her. “The Corpsman saw him ten seconds before the explosion. Dornan was out cold,” Tony informs her trying to stop us from glaring at each other. “Boss, listen, I know this may sound farfetched, but,” McGee stutters out but fails to state what he is thinking. “Will you spit it out, McGee?” Gibbs and I snap at him. “Spontaneous Hum combustion.” “Okay, why we’re at it, let’s bring in Santa Claus, the Easter bunny and the tooth fairy,” I inform him sarcastically. “Where’s the surgeon?” Gibbs demands after giving McGee his ‘are you stupid?’ look. “She’s in the waiting room. Just got here,” Tony informs Gibbs. After Gibbs walks away Tony turns to McGee and hisses, “Probie, what are you thinking? Spontaneous human combustion? It’s an urban myth.”
“Actually, Tony, we shouldn’t disregard the notion. Stories of the phenomenon go way back to the Bible in fact. But it wasn’t popularized until Dickens,” Ducky rambles.
“Charles Dickens?” Jimmy asks in surprise.
“Yes, he used spontaneous combustion to kill off one of his characters, Mister Krook, in the novel Bleak House. It caused a minor uproar. Dickens was accused of perpetuating the age-old superstition. Have you never read a Dicken’s book?” I ask Jimmy in confusion of how someone can so ignorant.
“I saw the movie,” Tony states while photographing the crime scene.
“Of course you did,” I mumble while taking a swab off the bed for Abby.
“The silent version or the British miniseries?” Ducky asks him.
“They were talking,” Tony answers him right before Ducky walks out of the room. Kate yawns and Tony can’t help but comment, “It’s too bad you didn’t get to bed at a sensible hour. I mean sleep because obviously you were in bed.”
“I get it, Tony,” Kate snaps at Tony.
“McGee,” Gibbs says while returning to the room.
“Yeah, boss?” McGee asks in him confusion on why Gibbs is calling him out.
“Stay here. Meet with the engineers and the plant manager. I want this oxygen system completely checked out.”
“On it, boss.”
“Everything in this room goes back to Abby.”
“Everything?” Kate asks only for us to give her a look that says she just asked a stupid question. So she adds, “Right.”
“Hey. Background the victim.”
“This is the beginning of a very long day.”
“Yeah. Too bad you had such a short night.”
“I’m going to the office. There is no point for us to be standing on top of each other. It won’t help us finish fast, in fact it would show us down,” I inform them while following out Gibbs.
“Hey Gibbs, Alice. I hear you’re not a fan of S-H-C,” Abby says while bouncing around in front of her computer while looking at us as we walk through the door into the lab.
“Is that a band?” I ask her in confusion.
“No, spontaneous human combustion.”
“Don’t waste my time, Abs,” Gibbs states.
“If you ever read my master’s thesis, you may become a believer.”
“I have seen so-called factual thesis that stat that the tooth fairy, the Easter bunny and Santa Claus exist but I don’t believe that any more than this,” I inform her before adding, “But if you can prove it, I want one of them in integration.”
“Doubt it,” Gibbs states.
“I can show you photos of what was left of a two hundred and forty pound woman,” Abby explains while using her hands to illustrate what she is talking about.
“Yeah, but you won’t.”
“She was sitting in a chair. All that was left were blackened seat spring, a section of backbone, one foot still in a satin slipper, and ten pounds of ashes. The rest of her apartment was untouched.”
“Abby, you know what? Just tell me what caused the explosion,” Gibbs says to her while showing her the caf-pow he is carrying.
“Ooh. A bribe. That always works. So I checked out all the electrical equipment from the hospital trying to find the source of the ignition. Nothing. Everything’s in perfect working order, including this monitor which recorded the victim’s vitals up until the point of blast off.”
“Huh,” I state letting her know I am listening and for her to continue.
“Someone went a little postal with the fire extinguisher. It complicates finding trace evidence.”
“The Commander was being barbecued,” Gibbs informs her.
“I really doubt they were concerned with forensics,” I finish for Gibbs.
“True,” Abby agrees with us.
“You don’t know what caused the explosion?” Gibbs asks her.
“Other than S-H-C?”
“All right. Get with Ducky. Maybe together you can solve it,” I inform her.
“Roger that. When he’s finished slicing and dicing, we’ll go bang heads.”
“Don’t cause any sparks,” Gibbs says to her while we leave the lab.

“Boss, plant engineer says that oxygen is supplied to the room through a central system. They did a complete check and everything was in order,” McGee informs Gibbs as we walk into the squad room.

“Day shift concurred with night shift. The commander was a pain in the ass,” Tony continues to report.

“Divorced, ten years ago. No kids. Wife’s happily remarried living in Santa Fe. Um… parents are retired. One sister. And they’re being notified by CACO. DiNozzo!” Kate reports before snapping at Tony, who is trying to look at her ringing phone.

“Harrison?” Tony asks Kate about the ID on her ringing phone.

“Hi,” Kate answers the phone.

“It’s Harrison.”

“Um… I’m glad you call.”

“Based on the condition of the body, the burn pattern, and the debris scatter, we were able to recreate the explosion,” Abby informs us while playing the animated recreation of the explosion.

“Doesn’t tell us much,” Tony comments on the recreation.

“Watch when I rotate it one eighty and play it in slo-mo. That’s the point of ignition,” Abby informs us while playing the recreation again. We watch as the recreation shows that the explosion starts at the middle of the victim’s body.

“What caused the explosion?” Kate asks Abby.

“Well, this was taken from that area of the mattress,” Abby answers Kate while moving over to the part of the mattress.

“I also provided Abby with epidermal scrapings from the victim’s upper left torso,” Ducky informs us.

“And the spectrometer found minute traces of antimony sulphide and potassium chlorate on both.”

“Matches,” McGee releases what Abby is saying.

“Light my fire, McGee!”

“Someone struck a match and ignited the oxygen,” I state in layman’s terms.

“Well, according to the corpsman, the commander was asleep,” Tony remind us.

“This was no accident, Gibbs. Barbecue boy – he was murdered,” Abby informs us.

“Get back to Bethesda. Review their security tapes. Find out how someone got into that hospital room and then managed to get out without being seen,” Gibbs orders us the next morning when we arrive in the squad room.

“On it, boss,” McGee responds.

“Start a timeline. Twenty four hours before the explosion. I want to know every doctor, nurse, orderly, and visitor that went into that hospital room. You two are going to Norfolk. Dornan had spent the last nine months on the Kennedy.”

“I’ll get the car,” Tony exclaims while jumping out of his chair in excitement.

“What are you so jazzed about?” Kate asks Tony.

“He knows that the first person you’ll be talking to is the NCIS Agent Afloat, Special Agent Paula ‘the slut’ Cassidy,” I inform Kate making Tony glare at me. I think for a moment before adding, “Maybe he while get laid this time. But I wouldn’t hold my breath on that.”
“Oh, you’re kidding,” Kate exclaims while chuckling at the man-child. “She was reassigned there,” Tony says like that changes anything. “What am I missing?” McGee asks in confusion, like normal. “Paula Cassidy is a rather attractive agent that DiNozzo drooled all over last year when we were at Gitmo,” Kate informs him. “And then blow his chances of getting blown or laid,” I add making Tony glare at me some more. “Enough talk, agent Todd’s. Let’s go,” Tony snaps while running out of the squad room.

“How the hell did pure oxygen accumulate in the chest cavity?” Gibbs exclaims when we arrive in autopsy. Ducky wasted no time in taking us over to the freezers and showing us where the fire started, which leave us with more questions than answers. “I do not know, Jethro. I mean, lungs I can understand, the commander was receiving oxygen through a nasal cannula, but the fire originated outside the lungs in the cavity,” Ducky informs us as he returns the body into the freezer and closes the door with a bang. He turns around and sees doctor Byers, the doctor who operated on the victim, Ducky adds, “Doctor Byers, you’re early!” “No traffic. Copies of commander Dornan’s medical records,” Byers responds to him while holding up the file. “Oh, thank you. We were finished, weren’t we, Jethro?” “We were, Ducky,” Gibbs answers Ducky after a moment of silence, Gibbs places a hand on lower back and leads me out to give Ducky and the doctor some privacy to flirt with each other. “Remind again, why does Ducky like her?” I ask Gibbs when we arrived in the elevator on the way back to the squad room. “I don’t know.” “Well you’re no help. Do you think we while have another victim?” “I don’t know.” “What do you know?” “I don’t have coffee. And you’re pissed at Kate.” “Yeah. She pissed me off.” “Why?” “What’s it matter?” “It matter’s to you.” “She doesn’t care that she left me home, alone. She didn’t even call to let me know she wasn’t coming home,” I exclaim in anger at my sister’s selfishness while leaving the elevator and walking into the squad room. “I reviewed the hospital surveillance tapes with security. Between the end of visiting hours and the fire, all but five people can be identified as hospital personnel. I downloaded them onto my laptop,” McGee reports while I look over to see that Cassidy is here for some unknown reason, probably something to do with Tony. “Are you eliminating the hospital personnel, McGee?” Gibbs snaps at him for assuming that they are innocent. “No, boss. No, definitely not. I’m going to check them all out. In the meantime, I’m going to run the five images through the face-recognition system. Just give me one second and I will have them up on the plasma.” “Agent Cassidy,” Gibbs and I great her while Gibbs grabs her bag and drops it on the floor off his desk making me have to hide a smile. “Special agent Gibbs. Miss Todd,” Cassidy nods at us in greeting while Gibbs move over to his desk and sit down behind it. “Agent Cassidy pilled files on everyone commander Dornan put on report,” Tony jumps in the conversation. “Not a people friendly guy.” “Yeah, we’ll have to get into all that,” I state. “Are you ready?” Gibbs asks McGee.
“Yeah. My first pass at facial recognition will be against the data base of military personnel and government employees,” McGee ramble while we stare at the victim’s visitors’ photos.
“I can save you the trouble. That’s Ensign Evan Hayes. He’s in the engineering department on the Kennedy. Commander Dornan rode his ass,” Cassidy informs us.
“More than other young officers?” I ask her.
“Yeah. He did not like him. I’m not sure why, but it got so bad that Ensign Hayes verbally threatened him.”
“DiNozzo, get me the report of investigation,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“There isn’t one. Commander Dornan asked that I not write one up, that he would handle it himself.”
“Oh, so this is Guantanamo bay all over again? You only report what you like, as not to get your boyfriend in trouble?” I snap at her in anger for her failure to report something again.
“NCIS Special Agents do not look the other way because they’re asked to, Agent Cassidy,” Gibbs snaps at her while agreeing with me.
That want what happened,” Cassidy attempts to defend herself.
“Yeah? What the hell happened this time?” I demand of her.
“I felt sorry for the kid.”
“Again. Do you ever do your job,” I cut her off.
“He didn’t deserve the abuse. Some people can handle it and he couldn’t. And I didn’t think it should show up in his record,” Cassidy continues to defend her choice while ignoring me and talking to Gibbs.
“Get Ensign Hayes in here, Agent Cassidy. DiNozzo, you go with her to make sure,” Gibbs orders her.
“Because she has shown she is incapable to of doing her job,” I add while glaring at Cassidy.
“Is that Dornan’s surgeon with Ducky?” Kate asks us when she sees the doctor and Ducky walking over to the elevator to leave the building.
“Ducky’s older, Kate. He’s not dead,” Gibbs states while we all get to work.
“Ensign Hayes was recorded on the hospital security tapes at zero two zero three and the explosion that killed commander Dornan wasn’t until zero three seventeen. Where was he between those times?” McGee asks once Cassidy and Tony return to the squad room and informed us that Hayes was AWOL.
“Find him and you can ask him,” Gibbs states.
“Any hits on his cell phone or credit cards?” I ask McGee while looking up from Gibbs computer where I am working and leaning over Gibbs shoulder because he is sitting in the chair.
“Nothing,” McGee answers me.
“Kate what’d you learn?” Gibbs asks Kate while turning his chair to face her.
“Dornan punished Hayes with port watch. He was one of the few left on board. Most of the others have scattered,” Kate answers Gibbs.
“They were away for nine months.”
“Well, the few I could track down haven’t heard from him. Ensign Hayes was your typical navy brat. His family moved around a lot when he was young. He went to high school in Alexandria when his father was assigned to the Pentagon.”
“Talk to the parents?” I ask her while sitting down on the ledge behind Gibbs desk and look at her.
“The mother. When Captain Hayes retired they moved to Scottsdale. She seemed a little concerned because she hasn’t heard from her son since the Kennedy made port.”
“E-mail his photo to the locals,” Gibbs orders us.
“Thanks,” McGee says while taking the coffee Kate is giving him and answering his phone, “NCIS Special Agent McGee speaking.”
“Thanks,” Gibbs and I say to Kate while taking our coffee.
“Really? When did this happen?”
“What?” Gibbs asks Kate when she just stares at him.
“Why are you being tough on Agent Cassidy?” Kate demands of him.
“Why didn’t she do her job? You can’t defend her, she made up her own mind,” I remind her in anger at the agent.
“I haven’t done anything to her yet,” Gibbs states.
“You made her spend the say, alone, with DiNozzo,” Kate reminds him while ignoring me like normal.
“She survived. They’re on their way back,” Gibbs states while getting up to walk away.
“Wait boss, one second,” McGee calls over to Gibbs before talking into the phone again, “Okay, got it. Thank you, ma’am,” McGee hangs up the phone and informs Gibbs, “Ensign Hayes just made a charge on his credit card. A hotel on Brannick Road.”
“Contact DiNozzo and Cassidy. Have them meet us there. You man the phone. Kate, Alice come one. Let’s go,” Gibbs orders over the top of McGee’s rambling.

“Gibbs, NCIS,” Gibbs says to the hotel clerk in the lobby, while flashing him his badge.
“May I see that please?” Spencer, the clerk, asks Gibbs while taking Gibbs’ badge to look it over like it is a fake. He hands it back to Gibbs and says, “Okay. What can I do for you, Agent Gibbs?”
“You just checked in an Evan Hayes. What room is he in?” I ask the clerk.
“That would be illegal to release that information.”
“We’re investigating a crime and we need to speak with him,” Kate attempts to get him to tell us which room.

“Second year Georgetown.”
“I’m going to give you a lesson tonight in practical law. I’m going to ask for Hayes’ room key. Politely. And you’re going to hand it over,” Gibbs calmly informs the gonna-be-lawyer.
“Kay? Hotels haven’t used keys in years,” Spencer has the balls to laugh at Gibbs making Gibbs glare at the gonna-be-dead-lawyer.
“If he has to wake up a judge, nobody is going to be happy,” Kate attempts to calm down the situation before it gets too much out of control.

“Okay. But announce yourself first. That’s in compliance with the recent supreme court decision,” Spencer finally agrees with us while handing Gibbs the card to open the door.
“All right, Tony, Alice you’re with me. Kate seal off the hallway. Paula you’ve got the service elevator. All right, we announce and then we go in. okay,” Gibbs orders us once we walked away from the gonna-be-lawyer.

“NCIS! Put your hands up! Put your hands in the air! Up! Up! Up! Get them up! Party’s over. Get up! Where is Ensign Hayes?” Gibbs yells the order while we point our guns at them when we arrive in the hotel room, only to see that no of them is our missing marine. A group of young people are standing there with their hands in the air in fear. Gibbs puts the gun away, making us return ours away, Gibbs adds, “Put your hands down. One of you checked in as Even Hayes. DiNozzo, search them and find the credit card.”
“Let’s see some I.D.,” Tony orders the teenagers, because that is all they are.
“Just give it to them, Jonathan,” Tiffany, one of the teenagers, orders another teen while she is being searched.

“Thank you, Jonathan,” Tony says while taking the card of the other teen.
“Where’d you get that?” I demand of the teenager while Gibbs takes the card of Tony.
“A guy gave it to me,” Jonathan defends himself.
“You’re going to have to do better than that, Jonathan,” Gibbs orders him.
“Look, I swear, it’s the truth! We were hanging out after swim practice and this strange guy just
walked in.”
“Really spaced,” Tiffany agrees with Jonathan.
“He… he just handed me the card and said that we should have a good time with it, that he didn’t need it anymore.”
“It’s true, mister. He was trying to get rid of us.”
“He said he wanted to use the pool.”
“And you didn’t think that was a little weird?” Tony demands of them.
“Well, yeah, but I mean he said we could party with his credit card.”
“Where’s the pool?” I ask them.
“Alexandria central high.”
“Agent Cassidy, you and DiNozzo babysit these people until their parents get here. And collect their car keys,” Gibbs hands out the orders while leading me out of the hotel room.

We met up with McGee at the entrance to the pool, and we all slowly move through the building, clearing every room we go. We walk into the room with the pool only to come to a complete stop when we see Ensign Hayes standing with his back to us.


“I’m done taking orders!” Hayes informs Gibbs while turning around to face us.

“Do it now, Ensign Hayes!” Gibbs orders his again but the ensign pulls out a gun and points it at his own head. Gibbs sees this and yells, “No, son. You don’t want to do that.”

“Then put the weapon down!”

“No, I can’t. I’ve got to cover my partner, isn’t that right, Kate?”

“Right,” Kate agrees with Gibbs while I stay hidden with McGee waiting for Gibbs to give the order.

“A woman… I would never hurt a woman,” Hayes states with a hurt tone of voice that Gibbs even thinks he might hurt a woman.

“Okay. I’m holstering my weapon, okay? All right, your turn,” Gibbs says while returning his gun to the holster on his right hip.

“I’ve been trying to pull the trigger all night, but I can’t because I’m a coward,” Hayes complains while looking down at the gun that’s in his lap.

“You’re not a coward. You just didn’t want to die.”

“I can’t spend the rest of my life taking his orders!”

“Commander Dornan pushed a lot of people buttons, not just your.”

“Commander Dornan? He’s not my problem anymore. This is the only place I ever felt safe. It’s the only place I was ever happy.”

“All right, let’s talk about it.”

“It’s too late to talk.”

“Don’t do it.” Gibbs yells while Hayes raise the gun and points it out Gibbs, Kate quick shots him dead. I gasp at the sudden death of a young man who isn’t much older than myself.

“That’s Evan. He was troubled, but I had no idea he was suicidal!” Morgan, the coach out the pool where Hayes killed himself, informs us in autopsy while staring at Hayes dead body with Gibbs, Kate and me.

“He was suspected of murder,” I softly inform him while looking at the young man who thought his only way out was suicide.

“Murder?! Evan! No way!”

“We think he killed a superior officer at the Bethesda Naval Hospital Tuesday,” Kate informs him without caring that she is being rude to a grieving man.

“Tuesday? When?”

“A little after zero three hundred,” I politely inform him before adding, “Do you need a moment?”
“Three a.m.? no, that’s impossible. He was with me. He called. He woke me and my wife up. He wasn’t making any sense. I told him I’d come get him. I picked him up in front of the hospital around two.”

“You must have the wrong time,” Kate states like Morgan is a senile old man who can’t remember anything.

“No, I’m certain.”

“Well that’s not possible.”

“Agent Todd, I’ll meet you up in the squad room,” Gibbs orders her to leave without saying it.

“No, Gibbs! That would mean,” Kate talks over him but Gibbs just give her a look and she storms out of the room in a huff.

“I, um, apologise for my sister. She really wants this case over and justices for our victim, but instead of catching the killer, we just caught another victim,” I explain to Morgan politely after the door shuts behind Kate.

“That’s okay,” Morgan says to me while nodding in thanks for the explanation of Kate’s bitchy-ness.

“How long were you with him?” Gibbs asks him.

“We stayed up all night.”

“How long?” I ask him.

“Mostly his father. They had a lot of problems.”

“Ensign Hayes tell you why he was at the hospital?” Gibbs asks him.

“He said he wanted to confront someone who was giving him a hard time, but he lost his nerve,” Morgan informs us before looking at the little bit of self-control he had and breaking down crying. Without thinking about it I pull the poor man into a hug, and just hold him until he cries himself out.

“Ensign Hayes has an alibi?” Tony asks us in the squad room, next morning when Kate informs him in disgust at herself.

“What’s going to happen?” Kate asks Gibbs in fear for what can be done to her job and life for killing an innocent man.

“Nothing. You did everything by the book,” Gibbs answers her while glancing up from the file he is reading.

“I killed an innocent man, Gibbs!”

“So when you get them killed after fucking them, you don’t care, but when you see them die, suddenly you care?” I ask her in surprise making her glare at me.

“It was suicide by cope, Kate. Get out it. We focused on the wrong guy,” Gibbs states while ignoring my comment.

“No one went in or out of commander Dornan’s room between the time the corpsman checked up on him and the explosion,” McGee jumps in before we can get off topic too much.

“What about the corpsman?” I ask Gibbs.

“I checked his record against the commander’s. Their paths never crossed until the commander came in for surgery.”

“There were four others on the security video you couldn’t identify,” Gibbs prompts him to report on the other people.

“Right. I’ve cleared three of them. One is still unknown… and I’m on it.”

“Go back to the ship. Go over your file again.”

“Agent Gibbs, I need to explain,” Cassidy attempts to defend herself again.

“There’s nothing to explain. You didn’t do your JOB and file a report on an incident and now we have two dead naval officers. Would it have changed anything? We don’t know. Did it matter? We’ll never know,” I state, at the beginning I was talking normally but by the end I am almost yelling at the idiot.

“DiNozzo! Go down to the lab. Go over all the physical evidence from the hospital room again,” Gibbs orders Tony while pulling me away from Cassidy before I do something I while regret in the future.

“Um… what am I looking for?” Tony asks Gibbs but Gibbs just gives him a glare that says ‘do as I
say and don’t ask questions,’ and Tony quickly adds, “I’ll figure it out.”

“Why won’t you let me hit the idiot?” I ask Gibbs when we are alone in the squad room.

“Because,” Gibbs answers me without answering me.

“Why? She deserves it.”

“Because we have to work with her.”

“I don’t like her.”

“I hadn’t noticed.”

Abby, what do you got for me?” Gibbs asks Abby as we walk into the lab.

“Not me. Cecile B. DiNozzo,” Abby answers him while leading us in the back office where Tony is sitting.

“Stalag Seventeen. G.I. uses a cigarette as a time fuse to blow up a Nazi train. Come on, guys. Don’t try this at home, McGee. It’s for grownups,” Tony says while pulling out a cigarette and lighting it. He takes a drag of cigarette but instead of doing it smoothly, he chokes on the smoke and asks,

“How do people do this? Okay, the cigarette become a time fuse. Check this,” Tony rambles while placing the lit cigarette in the match box and pulling the cigarette back, lighting all the matches at once using the lit cigarette. “Uh-huh. In real time it takes about twelve minutes for t to reach the matches,” Tony informs us.

“It’s cool, huh? The killer placed it next to Dornan’s side under the tented sheet, next to the open oxygen line,” Abby explains to us.

“Then he left the room.”

“Who was there twelve minutes before the fire?” Gibbs and I ask McGee together.

“Doctor Byers,” McGee answers us.

“She was the one who murdered him?!” Kate asks us in surprise.

“He wasn’t murdered. Commander Dornan died as a result of his surgery. Doctor Byers made it look as if he was murdered,” Ducky informs us while stepping into the back off.

“Well who was she trying to frame?”

“No one. She was covering her mistake. In nineteen ninety-five, she was the subject of a malpractice investigation on a heart valve repair almost identical to the one she performed on the commander.”

“So how do you know that he was dead before the fire started?” Abby asks the question we are all thinking.

“I compared Dornan’s preview E-K-G to the last I-VAC recording. That heartbeat wasn’t his.”

“She still could have murdered him,” Gibbs states.

“Well, not intentionally.”

“Doctor…”

“You trust my gut on this one.”

“Hey. It’s me. Come on, just ‘cause you’re pissed at Gibbs, and probably Alice, is no reason not to return my calls,” Tony begs Cassidy’s answering recording before hanging up while sitting at his desk in the squad room.

“Sometimes you’ve just got to know when to let go, Tony,” McGee informs Tony while getting his gear to leave for the day.

“You don’t really expect me to take advice about women from you, do you?”

“I could stay here and argue the point, but I have a date.”

“So? Now what?” Gibbs asks Ducky as they walk into the squad room.

“I don’t know,” Ducky sadly answers Gibbs making me what to just wrap him up and hide him from the world.

“You can’t let any woman affect you like this, Duck. Especially one you didn’t know that well.”

“My concerns are more immediate. I have two tickets to the opera tonight. She was going to accompany me. Jethro?” Ducky asks Gibbs while holding up the tickets.

“No.”

“Take Kate,” I state with an evil look on my face that I always get when I am making Kate life a
living hell.
“Do you know where she is?” Ducky asks us.
“No, Tony answers him.
“Autopsy,” I overlap Tony.
“I have to ask, why a boat?” I ask Gibbs while walking down the steps into his basement that night.
“Why not?” He ask me while looking at me over the boat rib he is working on.
“Because it takes too long.”
“What can I do for you Alice?”
“Kate is at the opera with Ducky, I brought food,” I answer him while lifting up the box of pizza and cups of coffee.
“Thanks,” Gibbs says while moving away from the boat and taking his coffee of me and opening the box of pizza I just placed on his bench next to his bourbon. We sit and eat in silence and once the food is gone, Gibbs returns to the boat and I sit on a wood horse in the corner. I quietly read a book on forensic science that I borrowed from Abby before leaving NCIS today.
A couple of hours later Gibbs looks up to ask me a question but he finds that I am asleep with me head leaning on the wall behind me making him smile. He quietly walks over to where I am sleeping and takes the book out of my hand, placing it on the bench beside ma and picks me up into his arms. He carries me to his room and tucks me into the bed for the night, after a show he gently slides into the other side of the bed for the night.
I wake up too see that Gibbs is already up and out of the room, I head into the en-suite to take care of my morning business and take a quick shower. I use Gibbs shampoo, conditioner and body wash to get clean for the day, they all smell nice and help me feel clean. Once I step out of the shower, I dress in a set of Gibbs sweats and an old NIS shirt. Once clean and dressed I head down to the kitchen to find Gibbs cooking something.

“Watcha making?” I ask him while trying to see past him.

“Breakfast,” He answers me.

“Thanks, that helps sooo much.”

“Coffee ready.”

“How do you even know how to cook? I though you basically lived at work?” I question Gibbs while poring him and me a cup of coffee, adding milk and sugar to mine.

“I was married before.”

“Yeah, and you lived at work so they left you.”

“Is that what you really think about me? I live at work.”

“Yep.”

“What about the boat?”

“Made it in autopsy and shipped it here.”

“Why?”

“Because you want us to think that you go home, once in a hundred years.”

“You think I’m a hundred?” Gibbs ask me while turning around to face me while softly laughing at me.

“Nope,” I say with a smile making him give me his ‘I think you are lying to me,’ look so I add, “I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again, you raised the first and killed the last one.”

“I’m not that old.”

“Right? You have any evidence to prove that?”

“Don’t need it, I know how old I am.”

“Alzheimer’s.”

“You’re starting to sound like DiNozzo,” Gibbs informs me while turning around and dishing up the food that turns out to be bacon, eggs and tost, all cooked on the stove top.

“Me? Sound like DiNozzo. Impossible,” I exclaim and sit down at the table as Gibbs place the tow plates down and we begin to eat. After the first bit I accidently moan at the delicious taste of the food, making Gibbs look at me with something in his eyes that I can’t recognise. “This is delicious,” I complement his cooking before adding, “For someone who learnt to cook before the invention of fire.”

“Again not that old. But thank you.”

“No prob. But I have a question. It’s not about your age.”

“Shoot.”

“Why did you hire Tony and Kate? I don’t think you would have the balls to be drunk at work twice.”

“I wasn’t drunk at work ever.”
“Then why?”
“I sew potential in them.”
“Did you see potential for me?” I ask him softly before changing to another question because I don’t think I can handle it if the answer is no, “Do you still see potential in them?”
“Some days.”
“Okay,” I say while looking at my food and ending the conversation because I don’t think I can handle him say he doesn’t see potential in me, especially because I am beginning to feel something for him, more than a friend or co-worker.
“Alice?”
“Mm-hmm.”
“I do see potential in you too,” Gibbs say to me softly while kneeling down in front of me making me blink in surprise because I didn’t notice him getting up. But after a moment what he said clicked in my mind making a surprised look over my face because I really didn’t think he would answer that question, I didn’t think he even noticed.
“R-r-really?” I stutter out in surprise while tears gather in my eyes.
“Really,” Gibbs answers me while gently pulling into his chest in a hug. He softly say directly into my ear, “Don’t think you are less important that anyone else. I’m hate that you doubt yourself and your importance.
“I’m sorry.”
“Don’t apologies, you have done nothing wrong.”
“I’m still sorry,” I whisper into his chest without being able to help myself.
“Come on,” Gibbs says after a few minutes when I have calmed down. He leads me into the basement and he begins to work on his boat because we don’t have to work today unless a emergency case comes in. I quietly sit down in the corner again d begin to read my book from the night before. It’s doesn’t take long for the only things to be heard in the basement is the sanding of the boat in a soothing paten, the periodically turning pages of my book and the TV in the background but neither of us is paying any attention to it.
After a couple of hours I get up and collect both our cups to make another coffee each. I place the kettle on the stove to heat the water and I see that the plates from breakfast needs cleaning still so I fill the sink with water and clean the plate while I wait. As I make the coffees I check my phone, and I am not surprised when Kate hasn’t even tried to contact me, even though I am not home but I guess neither is she. I grab the cups of coffee and descended the stairs back into the basement and hand Gibbs his coffee.
“Thanks,” Gibbs says to me while saluting me with the cup of coffee before taking a sip and then returning to his work on the boat.
“Your welcome,” I answer him while sipping my and sitting down on my wooden house to continue to read the book again.
“Good book?”
“Mm-hmm.”
“Why are you reading it?”
“I like to know what Abby is on about so I don’t feel stupid having to ask her to explain it in layman’s terms.”
“Abby doesn’t mind having to explain it, she has to do it for everyone.”
“Yeah, but who would you feel if you have to explain everything you do at work like you are in court every day of your working life?”
“I see your point. I never thought about it like that.”
“Besides, I have always been fascinated by forensics and how it works.”
“Really?”
“Yep, when I was five I ask Santa the last book on forensics and a mass spec.”
“That sounds like something Abby would do.”
“Yea, it does,” I agree with him with a small laugh out how similar we can be without even realising it.
“So you want to be a forensics scientist?”
“HELL NO. I want to be a marine or FBI. Something like that, where I can save people and have a shiny gun.”
“So you want to be a hero with a gun?” Gibbs teases me, while taking a sip of his coffee to hide the smile on his face but I can see it anyway.
“Nope, I want to make people feel safe, something I had never had and didn’t want anyone else to have to look over their shoulder every waking moment.”
“Well, you are following your dream in a sense, though I am insulted that NCIS didn’t get a look in.”
“Well, I was a child and NCIS was NIS with no women working for them yet.”
“True, true.”
“Want was your dream growing up? To be nice?”
“No,” Gibbs answers me with a laugh but then adds, “Probably to marry and have kids.”
“Well, that explains the three wives. But not the boat.”
“Oh, she’s my fourth wife,” Gibbs jokes while picking up the sander and beginning to sand the next boat rib.
“Oh, did she have a choice in the wedding because she can do so much better.”
“Nah, it was a shotgun wedding.”
“How did you manage to hold the gun and kiss her?”
“I’m talented.”
“No, you had an accomplice, anyone I know?” I ask Gibbs but he just gives me a half smile without answering my question either way. After a couple of minutes of silence I return to my book to read while Gibbs sand the boat in the middle of the basement.
“Break out the gear. I’ll coordinate with the MPs,” Gibbs orders us when we arrive at the base street where a lady shot an intruder in her home, while handing Tony his coffee. He quickly adds, “You drink that, DiNozzo, you’re dead.”

“Just my luck. One more hour and we’d have been off duty,” Tony complains once Gibbs has walked away, while walking to the back of the truck to get the gear and let McGee out.

“Got big plans today, Tony?” Kate teases him.

“Well, it is Saturday, Kate. What do you think?”

“Oh, you have a date with a girl who can’t spell her last name?”

“Or first,” I add.

“Oh, I… no, I was supposed to volunteer at the eighth street soup kitchen today,” Tony defends himself.

“You feed the homeless?” Kate asks him in surprise.

“Don’t be so surprised.”

“Why haven’t I ever seen you there?” I demand of Tony suspiciously.

“Sorry, I just never pictured you as the volunteer type,” Kate cuts in before Tony can answer me.

“Yeah? There’s a lot about me you don’t know, Kate,” Tony defends himself to Kate while ignoring me.

“You’re right. I’m actually impressed for once,” Kate apologise to him.

“Coffee, probie? It looks like you can use it,” Tony says to McGee while handing him Gibbs’ coffee.

“Oh, thanks, Tony,” McGee says in surprise.

“Don’t mention it.”

“You know, I think he’s finally starting to warm up to me. He even invited me to a party this afternoon.”

“Good,” Kate says to McGee.

“Where?” I suspiciously ask McGee.

“It’s a soup kitchen in D.C. A bunch of Playboy centrefolds are hosting a fundraiser there,” McGee answers me making Kate glare after Tony.

“Seems pretty open and shut. Perp broke in and tried to rape her. She shot him. Guy’s in critical condition at the base hospital. I have a Marine standing guard,” Hegarty, one of the MP, informs Gibbs while we walk into the living room.

“Where is the weapon?” I ask him.

“It’s a soup kitchen in D.C. A bunch of Playboy centrefolds are hosting a fundraiser there,” McGee answers me making Kate glare after Tony.

“Seems pretty open and shut. Perp broke in and tried to rape her. She shot him. Guy’s in critical condition at the base hospital. I have a Marine standing guard,” Hegarty, one of the MP, informs Gibbs while we walk into the living room.

“You ID him yet, Sergeant?” Gibbs demands of him.

“No, and he’s not exactly in talking shape either, sir.”

“With this much blood loss, guy’s lucky to be alive,” Tony comments on the bloody crime scene.

“Where is Mrs Rowans?” I ask the sergeant.

“With the neighbour next door,” Hegarty answers me.

“I’ll need a statement,” Gibbs informs him.

“This is Sergeant Hegarty. Bring Mrs Rowans home. I’ll meet you out front,” Hegarty says into his radio.

“Where is the weapon?” I ask him.

“It’s over here on the other side of the couch,” Hegarty informs us while leading us over to where the
gun is laying on the ground.
“Did you touch it?” Gibbs demands of him.
“Hell no, sir. I did get the serial number though. It’s registered with the provost marshal under her
husband’s name, Major David Rowans. He’s deployed in Iraq. Been gone for over five months.”
We checked the exterior of the house, Gibbs. No sign of forced entry,” Kate reports with entering the
room with McGee.
“They tend to leave their doors unlocked.”
“Well, this is a military base, ma’am. The women expect a certain level of security in their own
homes. I suspect that’ll change after today.”
“Kate, DiNozzo, I want you to head over to the base hospital. I want this dirt bag’s personal effects
and his prints,” Gibbs orders them.
“Yeah,” Kate agrees with him while watching McGee drink the coffee in his hand.
“You enjoying that coffee, McGee?” I ask McGee with barely concealed amusement.
“Oh… yeah?” McGee answers me in confusion.
“It’s not too hot?” Gibbs question him.
“It’s your coffee. I’m sorry, boss. I’ll get you another one,” McGee releases before turning to Tony
and hissing at him, “Thanks.”
“Maybe next time you should remember rule twenty-three,” Kate suggests to McGee.
“Is that the one about not marrying a woman who eats more than you do?” Tony asks Kate in
confusion making her give him a look that says he is stupid.
“Never mess with a marine’s coffee if you want to live, agent DiNozzo,” Hegarty informs Tony.
“That’s right. Dead man walking.”
“Let me guess. You take it black, Agent Gibbs. Marines always do. What about you, Agent McGee?
Agent Todd? Cream and sugar?” Laura Rowans inquires of us in the kitchen while getting the gear
to make us coffee.
“Uh… you know, I still have to take some photos outside so maybe later. But thank you,” McGee
quickly says before leaving the kitchen almost at a run.
“And have some sugar and milk please?” I politely answer her but it comes out more like a question
that an answer, after she stares at me waiting for me to answer her.
“Is he old enough to be an NCIS agent? Are you?” Laura asks us.
“I ask myself that every day. Thanks,” Gibbs answer her while taking the coffee she is handing him.
“Thanks,” I state while taking my coffee.
“Oh, sorry. This place is such a mess. I wasn’t expecting any company. Am I in trouble, agent
Gibbs?” Laura asks us in fear.
“You did what you had to do, Mrs Rowans,” Gibbs answers her.
“Please, call me Laura.”
“We just have a few questions to ask you, Laura,” I inform her while opening Gibbs notebook to
take notes on this conversation for the report.
“Is he going to die?”
“Maybe,” Gibbs says her.
“I just wanted him to go away. I didn’t want to kill him.”
“Did you know him?” I ask her softly.
“I never saw him before in my life.”
“Any idea how he got in?” Gibbs asks her next.
“I usually leave the back door unlocked when I’m downstairs. My… husband doesn’t like me to
smoke inside the house.”
“Is he the one who taught you to shoot?” I ask her.
“Yeah.”
“He’s a smart guy. How long have you two been married?” Gibbs asks her.
“Civilian time? Four years. Marine time is more like two. He’s been away a lot.”
“Must be lonely,” I comment.
“Um… we don’t have kids so I don’t really fit in with the wives on base. I manage I guess.”
“You have a place to stay tonight?” Gibbs asks her.
“My mum lives in Maryland, is it okay if I go there?”
“Mm-hmm. Just make sure we have her number. If you uh… if you think of anything or if you want to talk, you can give me a call or you could e-mail me. Night or day,” Gibbs says to her while handing her his card.
“You don’t check your e-mail,” I hiss at Gibbs while leaving the almost victim’s house.
“And?”
“When you gave your number to Charlie you turned your phone off? What are you planning?”
“She’s a marine wife.”
“What were you a marine wife? Is that how you know how lonely it is?”
“Alice.”
“Fine, I’ll drop it… for now. Who did a rapist get on base? They don’t even like letting us on base.”
“That’s what I want to know too.”
“You about done here, sir?” Hegarty asks Gibbs as we walk up to him and McGee.
“Yeah. How about it, sergeant? Just one thing. How’d that dirt bag get on base?”
“I’ve been asking myself that same question, agent Gibbs.”
“I want you and your marines to check every car within a five mile radius of Laura Rowans’ house.”
“For what specifically?”
“Make sure their military decals are current and they match up with the plates on the car.”
“You got it.”
You got it,” Hegarty says while leaving to do what Gibbs has order him to do.
“Whoa. Any cars do check out, you call me, okay?” Gibbs ask him while picking up a football that a couple of boys are playing with.
“Hey man, throw it!” One of the boys call over to Gibbs, who throws the ball back to them.
“Whoa!”
“Oh yeah!” the second boy agrees with the first.

According to our rapist, he was invited over by Laura Rowans,” Kate informs us back at the squad room.
“Oh! What was that little top I picked up as a cop in Baltimore? Right. Oh yeah, rapists are liars, Kate,” Tony reminds her.
“I don’t think we should rule out anything, Tony,” McGee attempts to say but Tony doesn’t listen to him.
“Oh, really? Do you know, Probie?”
“All we have is Mrs Rowans’ work on what happened last night.”
“So do you want to drag her in here and accuse her of attempted murder, McGee?”
“No, I didn’t say that.”
“No, let’s do it. It’s not like she hasn’t been through enough crap already.”
“Well, you would know, you’re the master at giving it.”
“Watch your lip, probie.”
“Hey!” Kate attempts to break up the pissing contest between the children.
“Your quivering lip!”
“Hey!” I finally shout making them look at me so I add, “shut the hell up. I don’t what to hear it, you are both tiny.”
“God, I swear the two of you are worse than my brothers, and they’re practically psychotic. We have to I.D. this guy. If we find a between the two of them, we bring Laura Rowans in for questioning. Agreed?” Kate snaps at them.
“His name’s Jeremy Davison. Sergeant Hegarty found his car parked outside the Quantico rear gate, keys, wallet, I.D. all inside. Run his phone records, see if he ever communicated with Mrs Rowans,” Gibbs states while walking into the bullpen.
“I am on it,” Tony says while leading back to his desk.  
“McGee.”
“Yeah, boss?” McGee asks him in fear.
“Get me a search warrant for that address.”
“On it.”
“Hey Kate. Your brothers really like that?”
“Sadly, yes,” Kate asks him.
“Hell no,” I overlap her making her glare at me.
“Huh. That explains a lot,” Gibbs says while ignoring the conflicting answers.
“Still going through his phone records, boss. Nothing so far to or from Quantico,” Tony reports to Gibbs as he returns to the squad room after talking to Abby.
“Home and office?” Gibbs asks him.
“And cell.”
“I’ve got the warrant for his apartment. It’s in Alexandria,” McGee cuts in.
“Keys,” Gibbs orders while holding his hand out to Tony, who has the keys for the car.
“I’ll get the sedan,” Tony volunteer while getting up to get the car.
“No, you stay with the phone records. McGee, I want everything there is on Davison by the time I get back. Kate! Alice! Come on. You’re with me. Let’s go.”
“Cleat,” Gibbs calls out while moving through the victim’s apartment, checking each room.
“This is sort of how I always pictured Tony’s place,” Kate comments while looking over the crappy apartment.
“You don’t know what your latest boy toy’s apartment looks like?” I question her in fake surprise.
“Yeah, except DiNozzo has better furniture. All right, let’s find out who this guy really is,” Gibbs comments while beginning to look around the apartment.
“You might want to come take a look at this, Gibbs. She had to have sent him that,” Kate says to Gibbs once she opens the victim’s computer to see the shoot in a very sexual poss.
“Yeah. How do you figure that?” Gibbs asks her while looking at the photo.
“Well, let’s say theoretically I had a picture like this. I… I wouldn’t be handing them out on a street corner.”
“You don’t have to,” I comment making Kate smile because she thought I was giving her a compliment until I add, “I’ll do it for you. I think I would start with Tony.”
“Yeah. Well. Okay, since we’re being theoretical what about if the guy happens to work in a photo shop?” Gibbs ask her while blowing a hole in her theory.
“Here’s an email from Laura Rowans to Davison,” Kate exclaims in hopes of proving her theory right. She begins to read the email, “The thought of us possibly meeting nice guys is both exhilarating and terrifying. On one hand I can imagine you throwing me down… Whoa!”
“You want a moment Kate? Gibbs and I can hand out that photo for you while you collect yourself,” I offer Kate.
“Whoa what?” Gibbs answer her while hiding a smile at what I said.
“Whoa. It’s pretty specific. Gibbs?” Kate answers him while ignoring me.
“Yeah.”
“Uh… by specific I mean explicit… in the truest most pornographic sense of the word.”
“Yeah, I’d say that’s specific,” I exclaim while reading it over her shoulder making her close the email so I can’t read it all.
“Bag it,” Gibbs orders her while leading me away from the computer.
“Jeremy?” A girl calls out from the front of the apartment while the door slams shut.
“Not here,” I answer her in a singsong tone of voice making Kate glare at me for giving away our position.
“Who the hell are you?!”
“That’s nice.”
“Special Agent Gibbs, Todd and Todd. NCIS,” Gibbs informs her while flashing her his badge. “NCI what?” the women demands of us.

“We’re federal agents executing a search warrant. Who are you?” Kate cuts in before I can answer her.


“Your brother was shot last night breaking into a home on a marine base. He’s in critical condition. I’m sorry,” I inform her while gently leading her to the chair at the computer and getting her to sit down before she falls down.

“Oh, my god! I knew it. I knew something like this was going to happen.”

“Something like what?” Kate ask her.

“He went on a date last night with some girl he met on the internet.”

“Ooh, is it my birthday?” Abby inquires of us when we walk into the lab carrying boxes that the computer and other evidences from the victim’s apartment.

“Yeah. You see a bow on top?” Gibbs asks her sarcastically while tipping the box in the guise of showing her the bow, that’s not there.

“We think,” Kate begins.

“You. You think,” I cut her off with correcting her comment.

“Laura Rowans was having an online affair with Jeremy Davison.”

“Really. I could have told her internet romances never work,” Abby says with a smile while signing the evidence form to say she revived it.

“Well, at least she got a hunk of a man. I mean, can you imagine how angry she would be if she had his photo but Tony turned up,” I comment making Abby smile and Tony glare at me for that comment.

“Bitch,” Tony hisses at me making me grin at him without a care about the week insult he used on me, so he turns to Abby and asks, “They all end in attempted murder, Abby?”

“Only the really hot ones, Tony,” Abby answers him with a grin of her own.

“I want proof it’s true before I drag Mrs Rowans in here,” Gibbs orders Abby softly while handing her the computer.

“Is this Davison’s computer?”

“Yes,” I answer her with a smile before adding, “You up to going digging for a sex sense between a married woman and her victim? It might get hot.”

“Well, if I’m going to find something conclusive, Gibbs, I’m going to have the lady’s as well,” Abby says with a smile while signing the evidence form to say she revived it.

“Of course.”

“McGee’s on his way with it,” Gibbs orders Abby softly while handing her the computer.

“Then we’re in business. When do you need it by?” Abby asks us while ignoring Gibbs and my moment.

“Now.”

“Wow, Laura Rowan wrote these?” Tony asks while reading one of the emails.

“Allegedly,” Kate snaps at him while snatch the email out of his hand.

“Okay, Abby, I’ll of course need copies of all of them, all right?” Tony says to Abby but we all give him a disgusted look, even though I wanted the same thing but I wanted it to read and learn about our victim, he quickly adds, “What?”

“Hey, McGee. You ready to plunge into the seedy side of the internet with me?” Abby inquires of McGee while he walks into the lab carrying Laura’s computer.

“I thought we agreed never to discuss that ay work,” McGee exclaims making me gage and Gibbs give him a look that can and while kill.

“McGee, I’m talking about the case.”

“Right, the case.”

“Okay, we’ll leave the two of you alone. But Gibbs, won’t so I’d get busy. DiNozzo,” Kate informs
the dead man and Abby while snapping at Tony who is reading the email again.
“I’m investigating here. These letters speak to the suspect’s state of mind,” Tony defends himself
while continuing to read the email making me what to know what they say.
“I’ve read them, and they’re all pretty much the same.”
“Well, I’ve only read two and if you think they’re all the same, then we definitely need to talk,
Kate.”
“Well, twelve years of Catholic school says that ain’t ever gonna happen.”
“Do you still have the pleated skirt?” Tony asks Kate while we leave the lab and enter the elevator
leaving McGee and Abby to find the evidence.
“Come one,” Tony begs Kate to agree with him about the victim and Laura’s meeting over dinner of
Chinese at Kate’s desk in the squad room.
“Let’s say Laura did invite Davison back to her house,” Kate finally agrees with Tony for a moment.
“Thank you.”
“What would she gain from shooting him?”
“Maybe, he was blackmailing her.”
“DiNozzo, he was lying on the floor with two bullets in him. She could have finished him off,”
Gibbs reminds Tony.
“But she called nine-one-one. Why would she do that is she wanted him dead?” I finish for Gibbs
making Tony and Kate give us a look for always doing that.
“Did she get cold feet?” Kate agrees with us.
“Or Davison decided to surprise her. Take it to the next step from fantasy to reality,” Gibbs adds.
“Well, if they only communicated online, there is a possibility that she didn’t even know what he
looked like.”
“So you’re saying the whole thing might have been an accident?” Tony asks us in confusion.
“I don’t believe in accidents. Except Kate, she was an accident,” I comment making Kate hit me on
the arm for that comment like normal.
“Bitches,” Kate hisses at me before adding to everyone, “Or Davison could be your garden variety
psycho. He latched on to Laura and he didn’t want to let go.”
“We’re missing something here,” Gibbs states.
“And I think we found it, Boss,” McGee cuts in while walking into the squad room with Abby.
“Laura Rowans and Jeremy Davison were definitely in contact,” Abby continues for McGee.
“We traced her email exchange back to the day they met online.”
“Four months ago on a little website called the Scarlet Secret. This is their homepage,” Abby informs
us while opening up the website and the first thing you see is a half-naked woman.
“I’ve got to get one of these,” Tony comments making up all give him a disgust look for that
comment.
“DiNozzo,” Kate snaps at him in disgust.
“I’m talking about the plasma screen, Kate.”
“What is this?” Gibbs and I ask Abby while ignoring Tony and Kate for the moment.
“Well, you know Friendster?” Abby ask Gibbs and continues when he just stares at her, “Real
people make webpages with personal profiles to connect to their friends online.”
“And their friends lead to their friends and so on and so on,” McGee continues but Gibbs just looks
lost making me hide my smile because I really don’t want to have to try to explain this to him, I have
more brains then that.
“Um… okay. Do you know what friends are, right?”
“Abby,” Gibbs states.
“Well it’s kind of like that only it’s explicitly for sex. Male female preferences. And you follow the
chain of pages and it should lead to somewhat anonymous cybersex or a real face-to-face meeting if
you want.”
“It’s pen pals for sex on the computer,” I explain to Gibbs in the simplest terms I can think of, when
he continues to look confused at her rambling.
“You’re a member?” Kate asks Abby in surprise while watching her move through the webpage. “No, no, she just created the page to look online,” McGee defends Abby who just smiles at Kate. I did a little trial and error with Laura Rowans’ screen name, home alone three two five, and Jeremy Davison’s nice guy six five three. Care to guess which fetish they have in common, Kate?” Abby asks Kate with a grin at the answer. “Mm. no, no. I’m going to hell just listening to all this,” Kate defends herself while waving the attention away from herself. “I think it is,” I attempt to say but Kate covers my mouth so it is muffled and no one can understand what I was going to say. “Rape Fantasies,” Abby informs us with a big smile like normal. “That is what I was going to say,” I exclaim after licking Kate’s hand to make her remove it while elbowing Kate for covering my mouth in the first place. What kind of a woman is into rape fantasies?” Kate asks in the observation room the next morning while watching Laura who is sitting in the integration room. “The kind that get off on it,” I answer her without paying any attention to her because it is all I have heard about since last night when Abby informed us of the fantasies. “Actually, it’s not that uncommon, Kate,” McGee comments making Kate give him a disgust look for that comment. “Actually, it’s sick and disturbing, McGee,” Kate snaps at him. “I dated a girl once,” Tony begins. “Nope, I don’t want to have to bleach my brain,” I cut Tony off but he continues without listening to me. “Who used to wear my police uniform and make me call her Detective Sipowicz.” “What the hell’s wrong with you?” Kate demands of Tony. “It wasn’t my idea.” “Yes it was,” I correct him without looking away from integration where Laura is getting jittery making me smile at that fact. “Well, the police uniform part was.” “So how long’s Gibbs going to make her there?” McGee questions us while changing the topic before Kate and Tony can begin to argue too much. “It’s called brewing, probie. She’s scared, nervous, imagining the worst. You’ve got to give it time to percolate.” “Not much longer,” I comment right as the door opens making Laura jump in surprise. “What’s going on, Agent Gibbs? I thought you said I wasn’t in any trouble,” Laura exclaims when Gibbs walks into the integration. “What makes you think you’re in trouble?” Gibbs asks her while failing to answer her question. “I’m in an interrogation room. Did the man die?” “You mean Jeremy Davison?” “Is that his name?” “One of them. He’s still alive. Though you might know him better as Nice Guy six five three.” “I have no idea what you’re talking about.” “No?” Gibbs asks her while pushing the sexual photo of her over the table for her to see. “Where did you get that?” “Off of Jeremy Davison’s computer.” “I… I don’t understand. How?” “You sent it to him.” “No, I sent this to my husband in Iraq. I told you I never saw that man before in my life! How could I send this to him!?” “You spend a lot of time on the internet Mrs Rowans.” “Why? What does that have to do with anything?” “It’s an observation. Not a question,” Gibbs informs her while handing her the emails.
“Oh, my god. Do you think I wrote this?” Laura demands of him while reading the emails in disgust. “Tell me about the scarlet secret website.”

“Uh…”

“Where discriminating adults go to play. Ring any bells?”

“It’s not like that.”

“You and Jeremy decided to have a little cyber fling. One of you decided to take it to the next level. I want to know which one.”

“I never cheated on my husband. I wouldn’t. I… it was just supposed to be a game.”

“Does this feel like a game, Mrs Rowans?” Gibbs demands of her while showing her photos of her victims.

“Um… I uh… I… fooled around a couple times online, but I never gave anyone my name or my picture. It was harmless! It was just a fantasy!”

“This is sounding like attempted murder!”

“I have to talk to Gibbs,” Abby exclaims while quickly opening the door to the observation room so quickly that she bangs the door onto the table behind it.

“Uh… you’re going to have to wait because the last time I disturbed him in interrogation was the last time,” McGee exclaims in fear of Gibbs making me smile at this moment.

“NO, McGee, this is an emergency. We screwed up big time.”

“This is a copy of the email you sent Jeremy inviting him to your house Friday night,” Gibbs continues to integrate Laura without any knowledge of what is happening in the next room.

“I did not write that. I never talked to anyone named Mister Mice Guy. Agent Gibbs, I swear to you!” Laura cries to the marine in the room with him.

“We have your computer. You two were exchanging emails for months.”

“Uh… agent Gibbs, we need a word with you,” Kate says over the speaker into the integration making me laugh while Gibbs gets up and stomps out of the room in anger.

“What!?” Gibbs snaps in anger.

“She’s telling the truth, Gibbs. She didn’t write those emails.”

“Who did?” I ask her in confusion.

“I don’t know. I’m sorry.”

So she was set up?” Tony asks us in surprise back in the squad room.

“It’s more like Jeremy Davison was set up. His computer wasn’t tampered with. He thought he was communicating with Mrs. Rowans the entire time,” McGee corrects them.

“They were both set up.” I correct the both of them while agreeing with both of them to a degree.

“And the reason for luring him onto a marine base to rape a marine wife?” Kate asks us.

“Well, closest thing to a death sentence I can think of,” Tony answers her.

“To humiliate her,” I offer as Gibbs walks into the squad room.

“Abby’s lab now,” Gibbs orders us while walking through the squad room top the back elevator with us following him like good little ducks.

“No dice, Gibbs. The hacker left no back trace on Laura Rowans’ machine,” Abby informs us as we walk into the lab.

“But we can tell when he created the email trail. The files overwritten on her computer show that it happened right around the time she shot Jeremy Davison,” McGee continues for her but I don’t know how the hell he knows that when he was in the squad room with us.

“Like I said this guy’s good.”
“The guy’s a dirt bag, Abby,” I remind her.
“I want him,” Gibbs adds.
“Well, unfortunately we can’t find him from here. We need access to the scarlet secret web servers,” McGee informs us.
“And a warrant will take months. They have a rep for legally fighting any attempt to breach the privacy of their members” Abby informs us.
“Can’t you hack them” Tony asks her innocently.
“It won’t work, Tony. We need core-level access with full admin privileges to track this guy.”
“Which means we’d have to be on the inside to do it,” McGee adds.
“Find another way,” Gibbs orders them.
“Abby, can you pull up the home page for the scarlet secret?” Kate asks Abby while walking over to the plasma screen on the wall.
“Really?” Abby asks her with a smile while opening the web page.
“I thought I saw something that we could use. Okay, at the bottom here. Can you click on employment opportunities?” Kate asks Abby while pointing to what she wants her to click on and Abby does making the page change.
“Can we get a job there?” McGee asks Kate in surprise that it can be that easy, it’s never that easy for us.
“Abby, click computer programming.”
“We’re looking for a computer programmer with experience in network protocols, IDS, firewalls, and ultra-high speed network capabilities. Excellent communication skills, a professional attitude, and the desire to be challenged every day is required. Bachelor degree’s preferred. Must be able to start immediately,” McGee reads off the page.
“Way to go, Kate,” Abby cheers on Kate.
“Oh, finally I get to do some undercover work,” McGee exclaims in excitement at the possible.
“Yeah, that’s not going to work. Probie’s got cop written all over his face. I, on the other hand,” Tony kills McGee hope in doing the job but Kate cuts him off.
“He does have experience with cybersex,” Kate comments to Gibbs.
“Yeah, is that true, DiNozzo?” Gibbs asks Tony.
“I think what Kate meant to say was that I met a very nice girl online once,” Tony defends himself.
“Yeah? What was his name?” I ask him.
“HER name’s not that important,” Tony states but we just stare at him until he tells us, “Hotjuggs twenty four, but I think she meant it as a metaphor.”
“Boss, Tony could never pass as a computer programmer,” McGee exclaims.
“So McGee goes,” Kate agrees with McGee.
“No. not McGee,” Gibbs states without telling us who is going to go.

You make me really horny, baby,” A random women into a phone and we hear it over the mic on the person who Gibbs picked to go undercover.
“Well, you’re certainly qualified and from the look of things, you’ll fit right in around here,” Davon Kane says to the person while we watch over MTAC, he is one of the people who work for the scarlet secret. So uh… what do you think, Ms Gibbs?”
“Um… I… say… when can I start, Mister Kane?” Abby asks the man.
“You can call me Devon.”
“Right, Devon.”
“What am I wearing? How do you like fishnets, baby?” the women asks in the background again.
“You can start today. I have a question for you, though. Have you thought about modelling yourself?” Davon Kane asks Abby.
“Oh, I prefer the computer programming side of the business, Devon,” Abby answers him.
“Okay, well uh… should you change your mind we do offer naked tech support to a very select clientele. And uh… the pay’s double.”
“That’s very thoughtful. But um… I’ll pass.
“Okay, great. Well, here’s your work station. And um… I think that’s it so… welcome to scarlet secrets.”

“Good work, Abby,” Gibbs complements Abby before turning to Tony and saying, “Go. Het Jeremy Davison’s statement. I want the name of anybody he’s had an altercation with in the past five years.”

“You got it,” Tony and Kate say in unison while leaving to do as their told without arguing for once.

“I’m in, Gibbs. Is McGee there?” Abby whispered to us.

“Here, Abs,” McGee answers her.

“Hi, McGee,” Abby whispers making it very know how nerves she is.

“Hey. Okay, open port six one eight on their firewall and I’ll join you.”

“Done and done.”

“How long is this going to take?” Gibbs ask them.

“How long does Abby have to be there?” I overlap Gibbs.

“Uh… there’s a number of different variables. Code complexity, accuracy of the logs, the software,” McGee rambles without answering us.

“You’ve got one hour,” Gibbs informs him.

“Or one hour.”

“I don’t like this, I want Abby back here were she’s safe,” I whisper to Gibbs while nervously running my right hand through my hair.

“She’ll be fine,” Gibbs whispers to me but it is obvious he is just as nerves about this as me before leaving MTAC, leaving me to watch over McGee and Abby.

“I got him. It’s custom code. It matches the stuff on Laura’s computer. He’s got hooks all over the system,” Abby whispers to us after a long while of silence.

“I’m on it. Okay, he’s using a router out of Fairfax. Tracing t back now,” McGee rambles to Abby.

“Interesting. He left his name in an encrypted file. Zed Death Six. The guy’s arrogant. He likes to sing his word,” Abby rambles before turning to someone who is staring at her and states, “What? I talk to myself you got a problem with that?”

“Got him! Name’s Victor Grotinski. He’ in Woodbridge, Virginia, off Davis Ford Road. Fifteen miles from Quantico.”

“That’s a good job, McGee. You get Abby back here. Coffee’s for you,” Gibbs informs McGee while walking back into MTAC. He turns to Tony and says, “DiNozzo!”

Yeah, boss,” Tony asks.

“Meet me at this address.”

Gibbs, Tony, Kate and I sit in the car as Gibbs speed to the location, once arrived, we all get out of the car and run towards the door of the building. We quickly but quietly move down the stairs inside the building, but halfway down the stairs the suspect becomes visible in a chair facing away from us.

“NCIS! Federal agent!” Gibbs calls over to him while we all point at our guns at him.

“We have a warrant for your address!” Tony adds when the suspect fails to move.

“Hands in the air!” I add next.

“Now!” Tony orders him but he still fails to move, we all move closer but are on high alert for the suspect to do something. Tony and Kate move to the front of him and Tony suddenly exclaims, “That is… that is just nasty.”

“Oh my god,” Kate agrees with him making Gibbs and me follow them around only to see he has his throat ripped out and his eyes are gone.

“You see anything, Duck?” Gibbs ask Ducky when McGee, Jimmy and Ducky arrived at the crime scene.

“Well, they say the eyes are the window to the soul,” Ducky answers him without answering him like normal.

“Yeah?”
“Did they say anything about when he died?” I add.
“Perhaps. Have you found them yet?” Ducky asks us.
“Nope,” Gibbs and I answer him together.
“They took the optic nerve. Time of death… about eighteen hours ago.”
“What do you think this is?” Tony asks McGee while holding up a bottle of an unknown liquored.
“He was slaving old systems together. He was jury-rigging his own computer,” McGee answers him while looking at the computers because he thinks that is what Tony is asking.
“I’m talking about this.”
“Some kind of solvent?”
“I don’t think so.”
“Oh, I wouldn’t do that if I were you,” Kate exclaims when Tony goes to open the bottle.
“You know what this is?” Tony asks her while Jimmy drags the gurney for the body down the stairs making it bang on every step.
“I miss Gerald,” I exclaim while rubbing my now throbbing head.
“Hey.”
“Hi, guys,” Jimmy says with a smile for us while I just stare at him for a moment before turning back to the scene.
“No, I don’t. But considering there’s no bathroom in this apartment,” Kate explains but trails off when we all catch onto what she is implying.
“Uh… probie, bag that. And why don’t you check out those suspicious looking containers while you’re at it,” Tony exclaims while handing McGee the bottles making me laugh him.
“O. I think I’ll throw up now,” McGee comments.
“Not in the crime scene,” I snap at him while pointing up the stairs, telling him where to lose the good food in his stomach.
“DiNozzo, find out what this operates,” Gibbs orders Tony while handing him a remote for something.
“You got it,” Tony answers Gibbs like an excited puppy.
“Kate, Alice, what do you think about Oedipus here?”
“There’s no obvious defensive wounds. Knew his attacker,” Kate answers him while looking around.
“Or he was surprised,” I add making Kate give me a look for cutting her down without thought.
“Why take his eyes?” Gibbs asks us.
“Some kind of a message,” Kate answers him again with so much confidence that she’s right.
“Or a warning, Kate,” Ducky corrects her this time.
“Several South American tribes were known to ritualistically pluck the eyes of their enemies to discourage them from followed,” I add onto Ducky’s comment.
“Of course, they were cannibals so they did,” Ducky continues to ramble after taking over from me.
“I don’t think we’re dealing with cannibals here, Duck,” Gibbs cuts him off.
“But I want to meet a cannibal,” I whine at Gibbs making him smile while everyone else gave me a disgusted look.
“No, I should think not. We’re not this far north,” Ducky agrees with Gibbs while smiling at me.
“Kate, could you come here for a second? I need your help with something,” Tony calls over to Kate, and when she walks over he points up to show her that a camera his hidden from view.
“I had to wear a skirt today,” Kate complains while getting ready to get onto Tony’s shoulders.
“I can do it, Kate,” I offer Kate while walking over to Tony and singling for him to help me up onto his shoulders.
“You don’t have to.”
“Well, we need Tony to be able to think in for the case,” I explain to her while stepping on Tony’s shoulders and reaching up to the roof and pulling out my knife to remove the screws from the vent that the thing is hidden in.
“Did you say something,” Tony asks Kate pretending he can see up my pants but he suddenly gets hit in the back of his head from Gibbs and he almost drops me.
“Oi,” I exclaim while trying to not fall and hold the knife still, “Tony do you know what happens if I drop this knife? Because I don’t.”

“Sorry.”

“You better be,” I mumble while finally getting the thing out of the vent, only for it to turn out to be a video camera. I jump down off Tony shoulders but before I land on the ground, someone catches me and gently place me on the ground, I turn around only to see it was Gibbs. “Thanks,” I say to Gibbs. “Now why would somebody hide a camcorder in a vent?” Kate ask us while I turn it on and move to playback the video.

“You’re kidding, right? Oh. You know, when this is over we really need to talk, Kate. You scare me,” Tony comments to her.

“Don’t bother Tony. I’ve tried and nothing changes,” I state while playing the video while turning so Kate and Tony can see. The room is filled with moans through the room as we watch the video but Kate quickly covers my eyes.

“Ewe!” Kate exclaims.

“Oh! Ewe!” Tony agrees with Kate.

“Well, he certainly isn’t going to win any awards for cinematography. And it didn’t help that he was shooting in almost no light. Okay, here’s where it get interesting,” Abby comments while watching the video of the couple having sex on the plasma screen in the lab.

“She’s a black widow. Killed him right after,” I comment as we watch them climax and then she kills him by ripping his throat out.

“That special moment,” Abby finishes for me.

“Any close-ups of her face?” Gibbs asks Abby.

“One glimpse, but I mean it’s a glimpse. It’s digital, so I might be able to pull up more information. I’ll do my best to pull up more information. I will pull out more information!” Abby promise when Gibbs just keeps staring at her until she does promise.

“Hey McGee.”

“Yeah?” McGee asks him.

“I need to know who hired Grotinski to create the email trail between Rowans and Davison.”

“Well there’s about a hundred and fifty gigabytes data on several hard drives.”

“Only a hundred and fifty?” I ask him in fake surprise.

“Hell, that shouldn’t take much time at all,” Gibbs comments before leading me out of the lab and in to the elevator.

“Who likes to manipulate people. The question is why Jeremy Davison and Laura Rowans?” Kate asks Tony as we walk into the squad room but they don’t see us, I notice that she has changed into suit pants instead of her skirt.

“Two lonely people pouring their hearts out into cyberspace?” Tony answers her with another question.

“Instead they find a psycho lurking on the Scarlet secret website?”

“Works for me.”

“Not for me,” I snap in anger at this case, every time we take a step closer to closing it we get knocked back three.

“We’re being played,” Gibbs agrees with me.

“By who, Gibbs?” Kate asks us.

“Kate, Grotinski was murdered by the women on the tape.”

“So Fornell,” I answer her making her glare at me before ignoring me like normal.

“She hired him?” Kate ask Gibbs.

“I don’t know yet,” Gibbs says while a his phone begins ringing

“We should bring Laura Rowans back for questioning,” Tony states.

“Yeah Gibbs. On our way,” Gibbs answers the phone and then turns to us while hanging it up, “Let’s go! Ducky’s got something.”
“Our young man was killed during coitus. That may be our black widow’s DNA. You know, the Romans considered during the act of love to be a great honour, mister Grotinski,” Ducky asks the poor victim as we walk into autopsy.

“Yeah? What would they think about videotaping it?” Gibbs asks Ducky to announce our presence in the room.

“From some of the murals I’ve seen in Pompeii, I think they’d rather enjoy it.”

“That’s an Italian thing, Ducky. We’re passionate people it runs in our… blood,” Tony informs Ducky.

“The only thing running in your blood, Tony, is cholesterol,” Kate informs him.

“And possibly Chlamydia,” Kate and I add to her last sentence making it overlay obvious that we are in fact related. It’s curable,” Tony states without denying it.

“What have we got, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky while pulling me away from Tony for no reason that I can think of.

“Well, I sent some fluids up to Abby. The DNA may be our killer’s. But what really interest me is the manner in which his throat was cut. The knife was inserted into the side of the neck and then ripped forward, severing both the arteries and the windpipe. Very professional,” Ducky explains to us while demonstrating on the air with a pretend knife.

“Yeah, and very familiar,” I comment.

“Thanks, Duck. You track down Laura Rowans. Tell her we need to talk,” Gibbs hands out the order before marching out of autopsy and I follow him to make sure he is alright.

“We’ll catch her, Gibbs. Don’t work yourself up,” I whisper to Gibbs while stepping into the elevator with him.

“I’m not worked up,” Gibbs states.

“Yes you are. Wait and we will catch her.”

“But how many other people have to die?”

“Ari,” I answer him as everyone else joins us in the elevator and I hit the button for the lab.

“I’m picking up some highlights on the baseball cap,” Abby informs us while working on the video of the killer.

“No, that’s not good enough. I need a face. How much longer, Abby?” Gibbs answers her in annoyance at the time it is taking.

“Maybe an hour to filter.”

“What about the fluid Ducky sent up?” I ask her softly while rubbing Gibbs back in the hopes of calming him down.

“I’ve isolated several female cells. I’m sequencing the DNA now. Like ten hours.”

“You think that’s Laura Rowans, Boss?” McGee asks Gibbs.

“Well, considering I’ve seen better pictures of a UFO, you tell me, McGee,” Gibbs answers him.

“I talked to Laura mother, boss. She claims she hasn’t seen her since yesterday and she’s not answering her cell,” Tony reports as we walk into the squad room after talking to Abby.

“She’s not answering at home either. I have Sergeant Hegarty heading over there,” Kate adds.

“You try the hospital?” I ask them.

“No, but if she’s at the eyeball plucking stage?” Tony says while realising what I’m implying.

“She might take another shot at Jeremy,” Kate states.

“We’re going to Quantico. Let’s roll,” Gibbs orders while leading us to the elevator to go to the car.

“Hi, it’s Tony,” Tony says into the phone once we’re in the car and he rings the hospital, “What’s Jeremy Davison’s condition? All right. If anyone comes to visit him, tell them he’s been transferred to another hospital. No, no problem, Pan. We’ll be on base in about fifteen minutes,” Tony says right before Gibbs drives faster making Tony correct himself, “Make that ten.”

“Are you going to tell us what’s up, Gibbs?” Kate asks Gibbs while her phone begins ringing.

“My gut,” Gibbs answers her while taking a fast corner making me land on Tony because I’m in the
middle in the back and have nothing to hold onto.

“Agent Todd,” Kate answers her phone. “Sergeant Hegarty has Laura Rowans in custody, Gibbs, and he also found Grotinski’s eyes in her kitchen,” Kate informs us once she has ended the call. “She hired him to make it look like a third party set them both up?” Tony ask Kate in surprise. “Yep, it’s not a bad plan, it almost worked.” “Almost,” Gibbs and I mumble together.

“You have ten minutes, and make sure all your cell phones are off,” Kim, the nurse, informs us while leading us to Jeremy’s room.

“You’ll be moved to a civilian hospital tomorrow, Mister Davison,” Gibbs inform Jeremy when the nurse leaves the room.

“Finally. Any idea why this women fixated on my brother?” Michelle demands of us. “We were hoping he could tell us,” I inform her. “Jeremy?” “She wasn’t happy but she wouldn’t leave her husband. I was going to tell him about us,” Jeremy informs us.

“Well, you’re lucky/ we have her on tape slashing another guys’ throat,” Tony states. “You… you do?” Jeremy ask us while his heartbeat increase making the beeping on the heart-monitor increase as well.

“The picture’s damaged, but once our lab cleans it up,” Kate informs them. “We should be able to positively ID her,” Tony continues. “She won’t be bothering you again, Mister Davison.” “I… I loved her,” Jeremy says sadly. “Let’s go,” Gibbs orders us while leaving the room.

“Those first two Navy cops were dumb but their boss, and the other on wasn’t. Did you see the they were looking at me?” Michelle asks Jeremy while leaving the hospital room only to walk out the door and look up to see us with our guns pointed at her head.

“Hey! That sound harsh to you, Kate?” Tony asks us. “Very.” “Go for it, Honey,” Tony say when Michelle goes to move for something in her bag. “My first round’s going through your right eye socket, lady.” “Yeah, Gibbs’ phone,” I answer Gibbs phone after grabbing it off his belt so that he can keep his gun trained on the bitch, and for once it’s not Kate I’m talking about. “Don’t Gibbs answer his phone anymore? The DNA we ran on Jeremy Davison two days ago matched five open investigations. He’s a serial rapist and murderer,” Abby rambles through the phone.

“We know.” “And the women that he’s with is his accomplice. It’s not his… you know?” “We’ve got it covered, Abby.” “I tracked down your cyber babe for you. Hotjuggs twenty-four.” “Yeah, she’s a real keeper, DiNozzo,” Gibbs comments while walking over to his desk where I am sitting and signalling for me to get out of his chair. I move to the edge of his desk and continues to write the report on his desk while he reads another report for a different case. “I wonder if he wears a sports bra?” Kate comments with laugher in her voice.
I am sorry for not writing since Christmas. I just couldn't feel this episode but I hope it is alright.

thank you for all the comments and favourites and follows.

I hope you all had a great new year.

“How did it go?” Gibbs asks a prison bus driver and the marshal who just fakes the death of the marshal.
“Perfect. Didn’t feel a thing,” the Marshal answers Gibbs.
“Did White seem to buy it?” I demand of them.
“He bought it alright. He was scared. You could smell it,” The driver answers me.
“Come on, Kate. Let’s go,” I call over to my sister.
“See ya,” The marshal say to us.
“You got him?” Gibbs ask Abby as he rings her, “No, Abs. I called to flirt… Abby, go to video. I thought you said you had him… No Abby. I do not!” Gibbs snaps at Abby making me look over his shoulder only to see that he failed to turn on the computer screen to the GPS page. I click him onto the correct page and gives him the location of Tony, “Okay, I got him now… Put McGee on… I got people calling me every five minutes asking if I have a VW for sale… It’s a car, McGee. Do I seem like the kind of guy who would drive a squishy little car…? Do you think…? Fit it!” Gibbs orders him before hanging up the phone.

“NCIS, Agent Gibbs’ phone. And if you are calling about the VW for sale, this is the wrong number, sorry for the inconvenience,” I answer Gibbs phone because he lost his nut and yelled at the last person who rang him.
“Yeah, I know. If the boss there?” McGee ask me.
“He’s around.”
“Switching to car feed,” McGee informs me while opening a video chat in the car.
“Gibbs, the geek wants to talk to you,” I call over to Gibbs making him walk over to me and I point to the car computer.
“The Deputy Secretary of state is coming on in MTAC in five minutes and she wants to speak with you,” McGee informs Gibbs over the computer.
“Handle it, McGee,” Gibbs orders him.
“Uh… excuse me?”
“You are highest ranking member of our team in the office. Deal with it.”
“Do you think that’s a good idea? This is a very powerful and important gov,” McGee rambles in fear, but Gibbs cuts him off by ending the call, half way through the sentence.
“They’re moving,” Kate informs us while we all sit in the car waiting for them to move from where they stopped moments before.
“I lost him!” Gibbs exclaims when the tracker stops tracking Tony, inform Abby who is on the phone again, “God!” Gibbs then ends the call in anger at what she said.
“We got a signal from the truck,” I exclaim in the parked car where we stopped to regroup and workout what we have to do.

“We’re back in business, Gibbs. Good call on the trailer,” Abby exclaims through the phone that is on speak so we can all hear her.

“Cash, clothes and a car. Everything that Tony loves,” Kate exclaims from the front seat while I’m in the back.

“Let’s just hope he’s not headed for Vegas,” Gibbs comments.

“Gibbs, it sounds like Tony was in an accident!” Abby exclaims in fear for her friend.

“Got it, Abby. We’re on it,” Gibbs informs her while driving down a corrugated dirt road, bouncing us around in our seats because of his speed and the roughness of the road.

“Hay! Hey, hey! My bike was stolen. You’ve got to help me,” A biker exclaims after Gibbs brings the car to a sudden stop.

“Who stole it?” Kate asks him.

“Two guys. The truck went off the road. I was helping find their dog.”

“They had a dog?” Kate and I ask him in surprise.

“A Shitzu named Kate?”

“They had a dog named Kate?” Kate asks him in surprise making me lose my control and roar with laughter.

“What’s a Shitzu?” Gibbs asks us in confusion, making me laugh even harder.

“It’s a little annoying dog. Did they describe it?”

“Yeah, they said it had long brown hair. Kind of mangy,” the biker answers her making me double over in laughter.

“I’m going to shoot him,” Kate snaps in anger making me laugh harder again.

“How much gas did you have left in your tank?” Gibbs asks the biker while I get myself back under control.

“Almost nothing. A half-gallon tops,” the biker answers him.

“Okay, let’s go.”

“Hey, what about my bike?” the biker asks us as we get into the car.

“We’re going to find it.”

“Great. That’s great. What should I do?”

“Find that mangy dog,” I answer him while smirking right before Gibbs takes off.

“I haven’t seen him,” the attendant, at a gas station, informs us when Kate shows him a photo of Tony and the criminal who he escaped with him.

“Well, here’s our number if they come in,” Kate informs him while handing him a card.

“Sure.”

“Thanks,” Kate says to him before we walk away from the counter and she just stares out Gibbs.

“What?” Gibbs snaps at her in annoyance.

“You’re worried.”

“About what?”

“Tony. You are. I can tell.”

“I’m worried about the job, Kate. Don’t confuse the two.”

“Now shut up Kate, I’m sure Tony taught you to do that when you were a puppy,” I comment making Kate glare at me while I laugh again.

“I sold it,” Gibbs snaps into his ringing phone before hanging up on the caller.

“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone while we all stand around on a random street trying to work out where Tony might be, because it is night and we lost him early today. “What’s his MO…?”

“Lane Harrison is an alias, and he is wanted for murder and robbery,” Gibbs informs us.

“Lovely. So is Tony dead yet or do I have to wait longer for a quiet working area?” I ask them
making Kate glare at me and Gibbs giving me an ‘I don’t know’ look.

“He’s leaving breadcrumbs,” Kate comments the next morning when we find another hint from Tony.

“Hey. Pull the records on a pay phone number for me,” Gibbs orders McGee, who he just rang on his phone. “The number is,” Gibbs say but stops while looking for the correct phone number, I hand him my notebook where I have written it down, “Eight-oh-four. Five-five-five, zero-one-seven-eight… compare the numbers to the ones we have on Jeffrey White or Lane Harrison. Family, friends, anything… What kind of things…? Hey McGee. Calm down… okay. I’m going to tell you how to handle this next time she calls you give her two words from the bottom of your heart… stick it!” Gibbs informs him before hanging up the phone on the geek without balls.

“Let’s break the pattern,” Kate comments once we have returned to the car, confusing Gibbs and me.

“What pattern?” Gibbs asks her.

“Dishonest silence pattern. I’ll start. I’m worried for Tony. There. I said it. I dropped my guard for two seconds. I got it out. And now I’m happy.”

“That made you happy?”

“Wow, you’re easy,” I comment over Gibbs making her give us both a look.

“Yes. Don’t you want to be happy, Gibbs?” Kate asks Gibbs the loaded question while ignoring me like normal.

“I am happy,” Gibbs snaps at Kate.

“You don’t look happy.”

“We’re done with this.”

“I thought we were.”

“Kate, if you want people to be happy, fucking kill Ari, not let him live. No one can be completely happy as long as he is alive,” I snap at her while Gibbs phone begins ringing while Kate turns and glares at me in anger at the mention of him.

“Yeah, McGee,” Gibbs answers his phone.

“Boss, I got the list of numbers dialled from the pay phone. One was placed to a hunting cabin outside of Richmond. It was only phone call made from that pay phone all afternoon. I’m feeding you the GPS coordinates now,” McGee reports on the monitor once Gibbs turns it on so we can all see and hear McGee.

After the direction is pulled up on the monitor, Gibbs throws the car into drive and takes off at high speed to the location of the cabin.

Gibbs brings the car to a scratching stop at the cabin and we always get out of the car. We upholster our guns and move through the cabin looking for Tony, dead or alive.

“Clear,” Kate calls out to us while clearing a room.

“Clear!” Gibbs calls from another room, meaning the whole cabin is empty.

“We’re too late,” Kate complains.

“Search it,” Gibbs orders her anyway. Gibbs answers his ringing phone, “Yeah, Gibbs… Hey, McGee… I want you to run the phone records for a land line at the cabin… Yeah? How did it work…? McGee! Good job!” Gibbs complements him before handing up.

“Gibbs,” Kate and I call him from our spot in the bathroom where there is a tack of bloody clothes on the floor.

“Clear,” Kate calls out to us while clearing a room.

“Clear!” Gibbs calls from another room, meaning the whole cabin is empty.

“We’re too late,” Kate complains.

“Search it,” Gibbs orders her anyway. Gibbs answers his ringing phone, “Yeah, Gibbs… Hey, McGee… I want you to run the phone records for a land line at the cabin… Yeah? How did it work…? McGee! Good job!” Gibbs complements him before handing up.

“Gibbs,” Kate and I call him from our spot in the bathroom where there is a tack of bloody clothes on the floor.

“Over here!” Kate exclaims when she finds the motorbike with a dead body near it.

“Throat’s slashed to the spine,” Gibbs comments while looking over the poor guy.

Lane Harrison didn’t kill those two guys in Seattle.”

“Jeffrey White did it,” I state.

“Tony has no idea who he’s with, Gibbs.”

“Wasn’t much of a struggle. Only these abrasions on his cheek. The head was grabbed from behind and immobilized. And with the other hand,” Ducky rambles while looking over the poor soul who
lost his life.
“Came around and cut across the throat,” Gibbs comments while cutting Ducky off.
“From the look of things he was experienced in this manner of execution, Jethro”
“We think he’s responsible for three of the murder. Same MO,” Kate informs Ducky.
“And Tony’s with the basted? Is he aware?”
“No,” I answer him.
“Probably not. We have to think Tony didn’t know anything about this. He would have never
allowed it to happen,” Kate comments while ignoring me.
“Unless,” Ducky starts.
“We checked the rest of the area,” Gibbs informs him.
“No other bodies. Tony’s still alive,” I finishes for Gibbs.
“Lynchburg across from Wal-Mart. Mean anything?” Ducky ask Gibbs while reading off a piece of
paper that was on the victim’s body.
“Yeah, Gibbs. I do not have a VQ!” Gibbs snaps into the phone while answering it, “What do you
got, McGee…? Long distance…? They may be headed to Lynchburg to make the sale. I need the
location of all Wal-Marts in the area. Fast… call the local LEOS. Make sure they understand there is
a federal agent working under cover.”
“What about the long distance records on the cabin…? Work faster,” Gibbs snaps at McGee over the
phone before handing up on him and turning to us and informing us, “It was a misdirect. He knew
that we would search the body.”
“What do we do?” Kate ask him and I node in agreement while looking worried about Tony.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his ringing phone, but it is a hang up so he rings McGee while
exclaiming, “God.” McGee answers his phone and Gibbs speaks to him, “Hey, McGee! Listen
up…! I just had a hang-up/ check the last incoming call on my cell and have Abby run a GPS
location… No. it’s where DiNozzo is,” Gibbs snaps at him before handing up the phone angry.
“Are you alright?” I softly ask Gibbs while placing my hand on his shoulder in worry for him and
Tony.
“Yes.”
“I don’t believe you.”
“What is with you and Kate trying to get me to talk?” Gibbs snaps at me making me take a step back
in surprise.
“Sorry. I’m just… never mind,” I state while stepping back again and moving to the car and gets into
it so that I’m ready to leave to find Tony.
“It’s Lane Harrison’s cell phone. Highway fourteen just past Newport News, Virginia,” Abby
informs us over the monitor in the car.
“Stay on the phone and guide us there!” Gibbs orders her while taking off making Kate and me
shriek at his speed.
“Are you all right?”
“Gibbs is driving,” Kate answers her while tightening her hold on the hand above the door while I
tighten my on the two front chairs in the hopes of not sliding all over the car.
“I’m sending a prayer in many languages.”
“Tony,” Kate exclaims over the ringing phone.
“Tony,” Gibbs repeats into the phone only for it to turn out to be Abby.
“He’s coming down Fourteenth, head for the west side,” Abby informs us making Gibbs take the
corner without even touching the break. “I lost the signal!”
“I need the long distance number from the cabin, McGee!” Kate orders at McGee who is on the
monitor again.
“Working on them!” McGee exclaims in frustration.
“McGee, we’re out of time. We need it know,” I exclaim in anger from my spot in the back of the
car.
“I never lost an agent undercover, Kate. I am not about to let DiNozzo screw that up,” Gibbs informs
us.
“One call. Doctor Haru Owangawa. PhD in art history at G.W.” McGee finally gives us the caller.
“That’s got to be the buyer. We need a GPS location on his cell,” Kate exclaims.
“Twelve blocks from your location. Head due west.”
Gibbs brings the car around the corner and brings the car to a sudden stop when we see Tony.
“Step away from your car! Hands in the air!” Kate orders Jeffrey and Tony who are in a car. Gibbs
moves closer to the car with Kate and I following him and I open the door to see Tony alive and well
but Jeffrey’s is dead next to him.
“I really liked him,” Tony whines while looking at his dead friend.
“Yeah. Yeah, I can see that,” Gibbs comments.
“Next, you are going to say your friends with Fornell,” I comment.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
I am stepping out of the shower when I hear knocking on the front door. I grab my bathrobe and put
it on as I walk to the front door to open it and see who is there. I raise my gun so if I have to use it I
am prepared without the safety on. I crack the door open, only to come face to chest with Gibbs
chest who is on the other side of the door.
“Can I help you?” I ask him while putting the safety back on my gun.
“Can I come in?” Gibbs asks me, making me nod and step back so there is room for him to walk
into the apartment that I share with Kate.
“Do you want coffee?”
“Sure. Where’s Kate?”
“Out with the lasted boyfriend,” I answer him while walking to the kitchen. I begin making the
coffee while waiting for him to tell me what he is doing here but when the coffee is ready and he still
isn’t taking I turn to give it to him only to find him right behind me, making me step into his chest
making me blush.
“I’m sorry,” Gibbs says to me while staring into my soul.
“What?” I ask him in confusion, not only did Gibbs just apologise but I’m too tired to work out what
he talking about.
“I’m sorry that I snapped at you. I…”
“It’s fine, it wasn’t the best time to ask that anyway.”
“No it’s not, you should think it is fine,” Gibbs softly exclaims while taking one of the coffees off me
but what really surprises me is that he pulls me into a hug. “I’m better know that we are all home and
alive. I was worried that I would have to bury one of my agents.”
“Please,” I say making Gibbs step back and give me a look but I continual before he can say
anything, “Tony is too much of a pain in the ass to die. Even if we paid him,” I explain making
Gibbs laugh at that.
“True.”
“Come on, lets what a movie or do you want to go home to your redhead?”
“What movie?”
“Um, I don’t know yet,” I say while leading him back into the main room and pulled up Netflix.
After a long time of looking over everything, we agreed on ‘the story of Diana.’
The night dragged on and on with another movie, and another movie. After the third move I get
sleepily and lean my head on Gibbs shoulder and fall asleep in that passion.
Almost at the end of the third movie Gibbs also falls asleep with his arm around me and his head on
the top of mine.
“No, for the twenty third time,” Tony exclaims while hanging up his ringing phone without answering it.

“Are you going to answer that?” Kate asks Tony as his phone begins ringing again while walking in carrying lunch.

“I’m in hell, Kate.”

“And he didn’t spill Gibbs coffee this time,” I state from my spot at Gibbs computer like normal.

“Well, do they have money there? Because you own me… forty three dollars and eighty six cents for lunch this week,” Kate informs him without caring about what eh and I said.

“I will gladly pay you today if you’ll answer this call for me,” Tony begs of Kate.

“Yeah? Who is it?” Kate ask him while walking over to Tony’s desk and picking up the phone but doesn’t answer it yet.

“Crazy ex-girlfriend. Haven’t seen her since college.”

“Stalker?”

“More like a stalk-him.”

“What do you want me to say to her?”

“I don’t know. Tell her you’re my wife or something. She’s been calling nonstop for two days. So I’m begging you here Kate. Please.”

“You pay me back today.”

“Sure.”

“Hello? Me? Oh, I am Tony’s wife. Uh, yes. We got married a few years ago,” Kate answers the phone making me laugh softly at this conversation. She moves the phone away from her mouth and whispers to Tony, “We have kids?” When Tony nodes yes she moves the phone back to her mouth, “Two.”

“Mummy, dad ate my food,” I whine like a little child making them give me a look.

“Hold on,” Kate says to the lady on the phone before turning to me and saying, “Shut up, mummy’s on the phone.”

“But he ate my food. My food, what am I to eat know?”

“Shh,” Kate shushes me before turning back to the phone, “Yes. And we’re very, very happy. So please don’t call back again,” Kate snaps at the lady before ending the call. She hands the phone back to Tony while saying, “I feel like I need a shower.”

“Pay the lady, probie.”

“He bet me forty dollars he could get you to say you’re his wife today,” McGee explains to the glaring Kate while handing over the money.

“Tony, I’m going to kill you,” Kate snaps.

“DiNozzo, pull the case file on Lieutenant Brain McAllister,” Gibbs orders Tony while walking into the bullpen.

“McAllister? We going after more treasure hunters, boss?” Tony asks Gibbs.

“Treasure hunters?” McGee asks Tony in confusion.

“Before your time, probie. McAllister disappears two years ago. His family offered a million dollar reward to anyone who could find him.”

“I had a few friends,” Kate begins.

“Wait, back up,” I exclaim while cutting Kate off and almost hitting my hand on Gibbs computer because of my giant hand movements, I continue to exclaim in fake surprise, “You have a few friends? You have a friend? That’s it, life as we now it is over.”

“I had a few friends in the secret service who used to work that case on the weekends,” Kate continues while glaring at me in annoyance and attempts to hit my shoulder but I move away from her quickly and hide behind Gibbs.

“Did you know this? Any of you? Kate thinks she has friends, isn’t that cute?”
“I do have friends.”
“Yeah, right. The last person you thought was your friend, she handed you over to the FBI. Before that, well everyone seen you breast and let’s leave it out that. That’s not friends that is people who tolerated you.”
“I do have friends,” Kate hisses at me while I just stick my tongue out at her.
“It was the holy grail for every amateur detective on the east coast, Kate,” Tony exclaims while moving us back onto the topic at hand and not our family spat.
“So what happened?” McGee asks us.
“Nothing – icicle cold,” I explain to him.
“Nothing – cold case,” Tony answers him at the same time as me.
“Not anymore,” Gibbs informs us while playing the TV.
“Thousands have searched for the heir to the McAllister Industries’ fortune. Each hoping to collect the one million dollar reward offered by his famous family. Today, private investigator Monroe Cooper believes he’s one step closer to solving the mystery. Mister Cooper, is it true that you have finally found Brain McAllister?” Cindy Ames, a report, ask the private investigator who is wearing a brunch coat. I click the TV off before we can hear his answer.
“Who. Whoa. Boss, that was… that was Monroe Cooper! The man who can solve the unsolvable he’s a… a famous detective,” McGee stutters out while Gibbs just glares at him.
“Do I look like I care, McGee?” Gibbs ask him while lifting his eyebrows in question while waiting for an answer.
“No,”
“Grab your gear. We’re going to black lake,” Gibbs orders us while grabbing his gear and leading us to the elevator.
“You owe me fifty dollars,” I inform Gibbs while waiting on the elevator to reach the ground floor.
“Why?”
“Tony got Kate to say she is his wife… with children.”
“Fine,” Gibbs states while leaving the elevator and walking over to the van and pulling out his wallet to hand me, my winnings.
“You two bet on that?” Kate screeches like a banshee,
“Kate,” I state without answering her but I do take the money to place in my pocket.
“When?”
“Monday. Lunch, I bet him by end of week you while say that you are married to Tony, Gibbs said you while say you have more self-respect. Double or nothing for with kids. And guess who knows you better?”
“What won’t you bet on?” Kate hisses at me when we arrive at the van. I get in the back with McGee while Gibbs, Tony and Kate climb in front.
“The size of your breast, I now they are unimpressive. But beside that, anything. Why you want in, you can have in.”
“I’m good,” Kate states while pulling up the old case on her PDA while Gibbs takes off at high speeds like normal. Is it bad that I thing that high speed and sudden stops are normal and people driving different confuses me and I want to hit them to make them drive right? Nope, everyone just doesn’t know how to drive.
“No you really ain’t. Gibbs, Kate’s delusional.”
“Children,” Gibbs snaps making us shut up this childish fight.
“Why are you reading up on a maybe-murdered-victim-dead-lieutenant-person?” I question Kate while looking over her shoulder through the hole behind the middle seat that is so the back people can see out front.
“Because,” Kate snaps at me.
“What does it say?” Gibbs demand of Kate while ignoring my way of explaining the victim.
“Lieutenant Brain McAllister, graduated Annapolis in ninety-seven, third in his class. He vanished somewhere between October fourth and the seventh, two thousand and two. No leads.”
“That’s so sad, not even having someone notice your missing, so we only have an estimate of his
disappearance,” I state in all seriousness and wondering if I were to go missing, if something happened to me, would someone even notice quickly or would I only have an estimate myself. “Thing I don’t get is why a guy worth millions would join the military in the first place,” Tony comments.

“The princes of England joins the army in England. The queen joined the army in world war two. Is this spoiled brat more important than them?”

“You think money has anything to do with patriotism, DiNozzo?” Gibbs snaps at him before he can answer me.

“No, I’m just saying if I were rich, you know, I would do nothing,” Tony defends himself or at least tries to but it just makes him a jerk instead of a dick.

“I thought your parents were loaded.” Kate comments while looking up from her PDA in confusion at that bombshell that Tony isn’t rich.

“They are.”

“So why do you work for the government then?”

“Because they what their son would do with the money,” Gibbs states.

“Would you give this idiot a large sum of money?” I overlap Gibbs in confusion at Kate’s stupidity while pointing to Tony.

“I can’t even get an advance on the will, Kate,” Tony complains almost in a whine.

“Hey, McGee!” Gibbs calls back to McGee.

“Yeah. Uh… he’s a former NYPD detective, works mostly for insurance companies and celebrities now. He makes a lot of money solving cases like this. Guy’s a… he’s kind of a cross between Columbo and Sherlock Holmes,” McGee reports right before Gibbs hits a pothole in the road, making McGee and I fall over in the back of the van where there is no seatbelts.

“You know, we really should get a seat belt back there,” Kate comments, right before Tony’s hand disappears between her legs for no reason “Hey! What the hell are you doing?”

“I’m looking for my fork,” Tony defends himself.

“Well I can guarantee you… it is not there!”

“Hurry it up, probie,” Tony orders McGee who is dressed in full geek clothing meaning plastic overalls and gumboots. Tony has grabbed both his and McGee’s bag out of the van while I grabbed mine and Gibbs.

“You sure this is necessary? I kind of feel like a dork,” McGee complains while stepping down from the van onto the ground.

“You are a dork,” I state while looking through Gibbs bag.

“No, no, no, no. Bad move,” Tony exclaims when he sees McGee grab a book.

“What?” McGee asks him in confusion.

“If Gibbs catches you reading instead of working, you’re history.”

“It’s almost as bad as touching his coffee,” I add while looking at McGee like he is an idiot for not knowing thing already.

“It’s not for reading. I’m hoping I can get Detective Cooper to sign it. The lead character in the book is based on him,” McGee defends himself.

“Please, please don’t piss yourself in fanboy- Stalker mode. I don’t need to smell like piss all day.” “Celebrity PI?” never heard of it. No!” Tony snaps while throwing the book back into the van.

“I’m not surprised you haven’t heard of it. There’s no pictures in it,” McGee mumbles but we hear him anyway.

“Did you say something, probie?”

“Yeah. I’m not a dork.”

“Whatever you say, sponge bob,” Tony comments at we walk over to Kate, Gibbs, another man, by the name of Lester, and a man by the name of Charlie, who is hoisting up the car from the milky
grave it was in.
“Take it slow now, Charlie!” Lester orders Charlie.
“I think it’s safe to say that car’s not going to run again,” Tony comments.
“All right, hold it right there.”
“All right, Kate,” Gibbs asks Kate who is comparing the numberplate to the numberplate in the report on her PDA.
“The Lieutenant’s tags, Gibbs,” Kate reports.
“Contractions, looks like you found your missing sailor,” Kester congregates us.
“Not yet,” I state while walking around the car to look in the window.
“I think you’ll find that pile of bones is McAllister, Special Agent,” Cooper cockily states.
“Gibbs. And I’ll wait for my MW to determine that,” Gibbs states.
“Oh of course. Monroe Cooper,” Cooper says while handing Gibbs his card but I snatch it out of his hand to read it.
“‘The man who solves the unsolvable,’” I read off.
“So you’ve heard of me?”
“Wouldn’t bet your life on it. No deflate your big head before it contaminates the crime scene, it’s written on your card. Fuckwit,” I state while waving the card in his face.
“My publicist’s idea…”
“Now why don’t I believe that?”
“Works great with the yokels.”
“How’d you track this vehicle to Black Lake?” Gibbs demands of him while ignoring his story for the card.
“Leg work. Luck. My gut.”
“Does it say that on your card, too?”
“I have a policy, agent Gibbs. You share information with me, and I share it with you. We have a deal?”
“That kind of goes against my policy, Cooper.”
“Which is?”
“Throw people in jail who obstruct my investigations. And throw the key away,” I state.
“Uh-huh. I’ll try to keep that in mind.”
“Well the dental records are conclusive, Jethro. This is our missing Lieutenant,” Ducky informs us that night in autopsy after confirming the victim’s ID.
“Any idea how he died?” Gibbs asks him.
“After two years in the water? Difficult to day. Do you suspect foul play?”
“Oh, you know me, Duck. I suspect everything.”
“‘The man who solves the unsolvable,’” I read off.
“Yeah? All these years I thought it was because I was a custard.”
“Well, of course, that didn’t help. There is evidence of hairline fracture on the frontal lobe of the skull.”
“Cause?” I ask him while looking at the fracture.
“Well, it’s consistent with most vehicle accidents, possibly from contact with the steering column.”
“What about drugs?”
“Well, in this state, a toxicological screen would be useless. However, drug are a possibility.”
“Too many of those, Duck. Too many,” Gibbs states his complaints about this case.
“Well, my current opinion is that Lieutenant McAllister met with a tragic accident. Most likely he drowned.”
“Keep looking,” Gibbs orders him while placing his hand on my back to lead me out of the autopsy while leaving Ducky to work.
“I hate it in there at night,” I complain while walking into the elevator.
“I know but we have to work this case,” Gibbs reminds me while we were down there in the first
“I know, he deserves the quickest time to solve his case, he has waited long enough but it still scares me.”

“Well, you shouldn’t have to return to autopsy tonight unless Ducky finds something.”

“I don’t know if I want him to find something or not. Does that make me a bad person?” I ask Gibbs while tearing up at the very thought of being a bad person, because I try so hard to be a good person.

“No,” Gibbs answers me while pulling me into a hug and rubs the back of my head with his left hand. He softly whispers into my ear, “You are not a bad person. You’re just scared.”

“What do we have?” Gibbs asks everyone as we walk into the lab the next morning to see Tony, Kate, McGee and Abby already there.

“Ah hey boss. I found a suitcase in back. Looks like he packed enough for about a weekend. Dive team will be back with the stuff from the debris field in a few hours,” Tony reports to Gibbs.

“Abs?”

“The brake lines are corroded, but they’re intact. Something’s stuck,” Abby reports from her spot under the car on a rolling board. She continues to talk while putting it out, “Whoa.” She exclaims while rolling out with a fish on her chest. “Hey, Kate. I’ve got a present for you. I think it’s one of your ex-boyfriends.”

“It’s a cold fish! Get it, Kate?” Tony exclaims.

“Can’t be one of her ex-boyfriends, I mean yes it is in the same state as them but it’s too good looking for her,” I comment making her glare at me after glaring at Tony.

“I don’t think this was an accident. It’s a bullet,” McGee comments while pulling the bullet out of the door.

“McAllister was murdered,” Gibbs and I declared at the same time.

“Your speakers are broken,” Gibbs comments as I turn Abby’s sound off, because that can’t be called music.

“Oh, Gibbs. That was the best part of the song,” Abby replies making us give her a disbelieving look.

“Correction. Your ears are broken.”

“What do you mean her ears? I blame the brain instead. What did the divers find?” I ask her while looking at her like she has two heads and neither is very bright because of the sound she listens too.

“Actually, it’s like what didn’t they find. My theory is they’re getting paid by the piece. They recovered everything within a twenty meter radius of the vehicle. Sunglasses, goofballs, Rick James eight track, typewriter. I didn’t see any point in bring the Maytag up from the evidence lockup,” Abby rambles.

“Anything to do with the case?” Gibbs questions her.

“As a matter of fact, found directly beneath the vehicle,” Abby informs us while walking over to the table to show us the phone that was found.

“What about the bullet we brought up from the wreck last night?” I ask her.

“Forty five calibre, two hundred and thirty grain hardball. Lots and lots of stopping power. The grooving matches a colt forty-five, old school military version.”

“Did you work up a trajectory, yet?” Gibbs asks her.

“Of course. The bullet’s entry angle into the side of the door is obvious as Anna implants.”

“Who?”

“You know, married that old guy? Had a TV show? Got fat, got thin, got fact, got thin, fat, thin…”

“Stop! Please,” I beg of her while her smile gets bigger, “Do you ever not smile? It’s creepy. And unnatural.”

“So using that angle, I back-traced the trajectory. The bullet travelled on this path. So unless he was driving with his feet from the backseat, which is something that I have tried but do not recommend,” Abby rambles while showing us the trajectory on a computer animation program.

“Abby?” Gibbs states.
“The wound had to have gone through McAllister’s body.”
“His entirely possible, Jethro, Alice, but if Abby’s animation is correct, the bullet passed clean through the thoracic cavity. Unfortunately, without leaving any evidence of its passing,” Ducky informs us when we arrived in autopsy.

“Hell of a shot,” I comment.

“Yes.”
“The vehicle had to be going over seventy to end up where we found it in the lake,” Gibbs comments.

“Well, at that speed a bullet passing through the ribcage without so much as glancing a single bone… huh! A hell of a shot, indeed.”

“More like impossible.”

“Thank you, Ducky,” I add before we turn and leave autopsy.

“Lieutenant McAllister was last seen in Norfolk on a Friday. Then found three hundred miles away in Black Lake, Virginia. Which would make sense if he was heading here to the McAllister Family compound in Shenandoah,” Kate reports while pointing the spots out on the plasma screen.

“So he was heading home for the weekend?” McGee asks her.

“Another twenty miles and he would have made it, McGee.”

“DiNozzo?” Gibbs orders him to report with the one word.

“McAllister’s military records are spotless, boss. Been running background on his family. Mother died in ninety three. Father passed away in thousand two… three months after the Lieutenant disappeared. The only surviving next of kin is this guy,” Tony reports while pulling up a photo of a good looking man.

“He’s hot,” I comment while cutting Tony off making Gibbs glare that the photo of the man without me noticing but Kate does.


“Figures, the rich never are,” Kate comments while giving me a look for my comment.

“What, you can’t say you have a problem with looking at him,” I defend myself.

“Even richer now, Kate. He inherited everything. He’s currently the CEO of his own airline,” Tony continues to report.


“Very Biblical,” Kate states.

“The Navy notified him last night about his brother. CACO said he took it pretty well,” Tony informs us.

“Lunch!” An NCIS worker calls out while bring a trolley full of food into the bullpen.

“Oh, thank you. I took the liberty of ordering lunch today,” Kate excitedly says.

“I’m not eating that,” I cut her off while looking at the bag of mostly likely healthy poison.

“Something healthy for once. There you are. They’re tofu veggie wraps,” Kate continues while handing the boys the food but she hands me a burger knowing I will make her buy me something unhealthy because I can’t and won’t eat it. Tony sniffs the food and pulls a face, Kate continues again, “They’re good, Tony. Abby and I eat them all the time.”

“DiNozzo, track down the bad seed. I want to know what he was doing around the time of his brother disappeared,” Gibbs orders him.

“Yeah, I already set up an interview for later this afternoon, Boss,” Tony reports to Gibbs.

“Take Kate, McGee, contact Cooper. I want to know how he found that vehicle.”

“So we’re going to cooperate with him?” McGee asks us.

“Fuck no, if we fight with the job of working with Fornell and the FBI. Why the hell would we work with some random bloke?” I ask him while questioning if he has a brain in the pin head.

“He’s going to cooperate with me,” Gibbs adds.

“I’ll be right back. I’m just going to run this down to Abby. Enjoy,” Kate say while smile. Tony
takes a bit of the ‘food’ but spits it in the bin and they all throw their food out, as I take a big bit of
my burger.
“How did you get her to buy you that?” Tony demands of me while glaring at me yummy burger.
“I’m a bitch,” I answer him.
“Yeah, but how did you get that burger.”
“I’m a bitch. And she knows it.”

“He doesn’t know it… yet,” McGee say to Cooper as we walk into it behind him so he can’t see us.
“Don’t know what, McGee?” Gibbs demands making McGee jump and turn around to face us.
“What a great guy I am, Gibbs,” Cooper answers him.
“That’s yet to be seen.,” I mumble before inquiring of him, “You ready to tell us how you found
McAllister?”
“You ready to tell me what you pulled out of his car and his corpse?”
“On what?”
“How bad you want that million dollar reward,” I state while following Gibbs over to his desk.
“Oh, considering how I don’t collect ‘til you put the murderer behind bars, oh, you got me but the
short hairs here Gibbs, ma’am. Yeah. I figured the Lieutenant headed home that weekend. But the
back road that he liked to drive… I think it was washed out. Here, take a look at these weather
patterns. I spent nine weeks getting these from the National Weather Service. Every Doppler readout,
every satellite image I could find. Pocket of storms, real tight, near the road,” Cooper explains while
handing us the reports he used.
“Enough to swell that creek alongside?” McGee asks him.
“Yeah, but only on that side of the mountain, kid. My educated guess? I think McAllister doubled
back, took this road to the other side where the storm hadn’t reached yet. See, the locals only use that
road when there are bad storms.”
“It’s right along Black Lake, Boss.”
“I figured if somebody wanted to kill him, they had to know the road and the weather the way
McAllister did. And they’d have to know he was coming. Am I right?”
“Don’t even say it if you want to live!” Kate snaps at Tony while placing her stuff at her desk.
“What did Tomas McAllister have to say?” Gibbs demands of Tony and Kate who is bickering like a
couple of five-year-olds.
“He hadn’t heard fr5om his brother in three months.”
“Definitely hiding something, boss,” Tony taps on making Kate jump to his defence.
“My best guess, it was grief. There’s no wat he’s involved, Gibbs.”
“Abby, what do you have?” I ask her as she walks into the squad room.
“The last three calls that came in on the phone from the lake were all made in Friday, October
fourth,” Abby informs us.
“Yes?” Gibbs asks her to continue with that one word.
“And they were all from his brother, Tomas McAllister. Sorry, Kate.”
“So, Kate’s boyfriends isn’t as innocent as she thinks,” I say in the tone of voice one uses on a small
child.
“This McAllister family’s got more skeletons than a North Korean prison camp, Gibbs. That’s
everything I turned up. Six months of leg work. Is it okay to smoke in here, sweetheart?” Cooper say
while placing file boxes on the table in the garage and pulling out a cigar to light up before thinking
to ask Kate and I if that is okay.
“It’s Agent Todd, and no, Detective Cooper. It’s a federal office building,” Kate answers him
snidely.
“It’s a wonder you guys catch anybody working under these conditions,” Cooper complains while
Gibbs and I look through his files.
“We manage.”
“Is this supposed to be in some sort of order?” I demand of the detective.
“The order is up here, ma’am. And I’ll be glad to lay it out for you once you tell me what you found in that wreck,” Cooper explains to me while taping his head so I understand where the order is.
“Lieutenant McAllister was shot,” Gibbs states.
“How many times?”
“At least once,” Kate answers him this time.
“You get the round?”
“It was recovered from the passenger-side door,” I state.
“Uh-huh. Pistol, huh? Rifle would go clear through.”
“Forty five,” Gibbs and I state together.
“Ahh. Car must have been stopped. He was approached, but not alarmed. Know his attacker? One shot, point blank. Bam. Poor sap never saw it coming. You know how, Gibbs. Want to know why?” Cooper asks Gibbs as the elevator opens to show Tony and McGee inside with a giant board to help workout the case.
“Ow! Angle your end down, Probie,” Tony orders McGee while they attempted to remove the board from the lift area.
“I told you we should have taken the legs off,” McGee complains to Tony.
“Ow! OE! I said down! What does Cooper need this thing for anyway?”
“He’s old school. It’s part of his process. He was solved every case he’s taken on, Tony. How many detectives do you know with a hundred percent batting average?”
“Gibbs?” I answer McGee while he and Tony struggle to move the table so they can place the board there.
“You mean besides Gibbs?” Tony overlaps me. They place the board in place making Tony exclaim, “Finally.”
“Change of plans. We’re doing this upstairs,” Gibbs orders them while we step into the elevator leaving them to have to move the board back up to the squad room.
“Elaine McAllister, the mother, into the occult in a big way. Psychic, séances, all that weird sh,” Cooper explains in the squad room while pointing out which player he is talking about but stops his word when he see Gibbs is glaring at him from his spot at his desk with me sitting behind him and Kate is giving him a look from her spot at her desk. He quickly changes it to, “stuff. She dies in ninety three, the family falls apart.”
“The old man. He took it pretty hard. He decided he was going to contact the dead wife. Starts neglecting the family business.”
“What do you mean by make contact?” I demand of him in confusion.
“He consults this space cadet, Saleena Lockhart. Claimed to be a psychic.”
“I’ve heard of her. She used to have that tabloid astrology column,” Kate exclaims.
“I don’t buy it,” Tony comments.
“Astrology?”
“No you reading tabloids.”
“No, it means you reading,” I comment over the top of Tony making Tony give me a look for calling him an ‘it.’
“She weasels her way into the old man’s life. Next thing you know she’s practically running it. McAllister Avionics starts to slide until it’s almost bankrupt by two thousand,” Cooper continues to report to us.
“How much money did he leave her?” Gibbs and I ask him together.
“You’re quick, both of you. Almost ten million. He changed his will two weeks after the Lieutenant went missing. The surviving brother, still fighting it in court.”
“She’s kind of like Anna Nicole,” Tony comments.
“Who?”
“That’s what I said. McGee, run a background on this whack job. I want to know where she is right

“On it, boss,” McGee answers while moving over to his desk to do it.

“I know what you’re thinking. She didn’t do it, Gibbs. This is a smoking gun. Thomas McAllister has a plan to save the family’s fortune. He wanted to get out of avionics and into his own airline. And it’s a good plan, but it involved leveraging every remaining asset the McAllister’s had. The brother didn’t agree.”

“The lieutenant was cashing out of the company?” I ask him.

“And going his own way. This is the contract divesting him of all family business.”

“How’d you get this?” Gibbs demands while reading the contract while I read over his shoulder.

“You don’t want to know. What you want to do is look at the date.”

“October fifth, two thousand and two,” I read.

“The weekend he vanished. Luckily for the little brother, he didn’t sign the contract.”

“I don’t believe in luck,” Gibbs states.

“Neither do I. so when are you bringing McAllister in?”

“We’re not,” I state.

“What?! But it’s all there! Motive, opportunity, the calls on the Lieutenant’s cell phone.”

“When you were a cop, did you let civilians lay out your cases?” Gibbs demands of him.

“Or did you work them yourself?” I add making the detective give us a look.

“NCIS has had this case for two years. How long am I supposed to wait?” Cooper demands of us angrily.

“‘Till we’re done!”

You are looking for the reward,” Gibbs states.

“We’re looking for the murderer.”

“Thomas McAllister is you man, trust me!” Cooper exclaims.

“Trust is earned, not giving.”

“I don’t trust anyone either. Kate, how is your rapport with McAllister?” Gibbs explains to the detective.

“She’s got more than a rapport, boss,” Tony jumps in.

“Well, good. Call him. You’re having dinner with him tonight.”

“What if he says no?” Kate asks Gibbs.

“The way he was looking at you? I think you’re going to be the one saying no,” Tony exclaims.

“McGee, you find my psychic yet?” Gibbs demands.

“I have her business address. It’s a TV talk show set in D.C. She’s there now,” McGee reports.

“DiNozzo, Alice, you’re with me.”

“Hey Cooper! I trust you can find your way out,” I yell to the detective while walking to the elevator.

“ Believe in any of this psychic stuff?” Tony asks us when we arrive at the sound stage of the ‘psychic’ show.

“No, you?” Gibbs states.

“Not possible,” I answer Tony overtop of Gibbs.

“Ah, used one on a case in Baltimore once. Lead is right to this kidnapped five years old girl,” Tony proudly exclaims.

“Is that a fact?” Gibbs asks him.

“Yeah. How do you explain it?” Tony asks Gibbs.

Simple. She was probably in on it.”

“So what your saying is that you failed to do your job, and then let a hack do it for you? And you let a kidnapper ‘help’ find the victim?” I ask Tony in disgust for his ability to do his job.

“Rolling,” An assistants calls out as we walk up to her.

“Special Agent Gibbs, Alice, DiNozzo, NCIS. We’re looking to find Saleena Lockhart,” Gibbs inform the assistant while we all show her our IDs.

“Yeah, she’s inside, but you can’t go,” The assistant makes the mistake of telling us that, we all
barge into the room making the assistant call after us, “Hey! Hey, wait! They’re still shooting! Damn!”

“And your grandfather wants you to know that he will always be with you, Sally. Always,” Saleena, tells the women sitting across from her in the recording room. Sally begins to cry while applause is animated by a computer somewhere else giving the impression that there is an audience.

“Thank you so much, Saleena,” Sally cry’s to the ‘psychic’.

“And remember, look and you shall see, listen and you will hear. Our departed loved one still have much to teach us,” Saleena say making the applause play through the room again./

“Huh. You think this is how they do it on the Oprah show?” Tony asks us.

“Never believe what you see on TV,” Gibbs states.

“What? Are you saying sex isn’t as good as the porn makes it look?” I ask Gibbs in fake fear. Gibbs gives me a look that just say we while talk.

“No,” Tony laughs at me making me pout before adding, “It’s so much better.”

“Really?”

“Until next time, I’m Saleena Lockhart,” Saleena says to the camera.

“And cut!” the stage manager calls out.

“Look and you shall see,” Saleena snaps after the bells signalling that the camera is off. She continues bitching, “Spelled S-E-A? What kind of third grader is writing these cue cards!?”

“Just give us ten minutes and we’ll shoot it again.”

“I am financing this pilot with my own money. I can’t afford another of your ten minutes!”

“If anybody needs me, I’ll be in craft service,” Sally inform them while leaving.

“Make sure you save some for the rest of the crew. What!”?

“There are two guys here to see you. I tried to stop them. Sorry,” the assistant tells her making me glare at him because I’m here to, dam it.

“What am I invisible?” I mumble with a pout.

“Special Agents,” Gibbs starts.

“Gibbs and DiNozzo from NCIS. How may I help you?” Saleena cuts Gibbs off.

“You’re the psychic. You tell me,” I snidely say because she failed to mention me, I’m not invisible.

“Brain McAllister. You found his remains in Black river.”

“Wow, she’s good, Boss,” Tony exclaims in surprise.


“It’s on the news, Idiot,” I exclaim at the same time as Gibbs.

“I told Brain’s father that I felt Brain was in a cold, dark place,” Saleena informs us.

“You can say that. He was murdered,” Gibbs states.

“Yes. Yes, he told me.”

“Who?” Tony ask her in confusion.

“Brain. We connect through a passage on the other side.”

“Passage? That’s what you call it?” I ask her in disbelieve.

“You look sceptical. Oh, that’s okay. You don’t have to believe.”

“So did he tell you who did it?” Tony demands of her.

“It doesn’t work that way, Agent DiNozzo. Can I get a green tea, please?”

“How does it work?” Gibbs demands of her.

“Well, I get impressions, feelings. I don’t get specific details.”

“Do you have any feeling about his father including you in his will?” I demand of her.

“I didn’t ask him.”

“I’m not psychic, but considering he was a fighter pilot, I’d say he’d be pretty pissed off about it,” Gibbs comments.

“Your point, Agent Gibbs?”

“Where were you the weekend that Lieutenant McAllister was murdered?” I demand of her.

“Luray. Luray Caverns. I was hosting a spiritual retreat.”

“Luray? Hey boss, isn’t that about fifteen miles from Black Lake?” Tony ask Gibbs in fake surprise.

“Can you tell me what I’m thinking now, Miss Lockhart?” Gibbs asks her.
“I don’t have to be a psychic to tell that. Could we discuss this outside pleaser? Your energy is disrupting my set. Thank you,” Saleena snaps at us politely while leading us to the sound stage. “Look, I had nothing to do with Brain’s disappearance. You should talk to his brother,” Saleena informs us once we arrive.

“Yah?” Gibbs asks her.

“Why’s that?” I add.

“Thomas was the black sheep, and he hated Brain. I may be many things, Agent Gibbs, but I am not a murderer,” Saleena snaps Gibbs while ignoring me making me glare at her in anger, I AM NOT INVISABLE.

“But you talk to dead people,” Gibbs states.

“I have over a dozen people who can verify my whereabouts on that weekend. One of them is a senator.”

“We’re need their names,” Tony comments.

“My lawyer will get them to you. Now, is there something else I can do for you?” Saleena asks us right as a red dot appears on her head. Gibbs reacts by pulling her to the ground, as Tony and I drop to the ground ourselves, as a series of gunshots ring out and hit right where we were standing just a moment before. Tony grabs his gun and returns fire, one damages the back window of the jeep where the bullets come from.

“You didn’t see that coming, did you?” Gibbs comments.

“Son of a bitch,” Tony exclaims while holstering his gun in anger for the vehicle getting away.

“Did you get a license number?” Gibbs demands of Tony from his spot where he is protecting Saleena. Gibbs looks over to me to see I’m shaking in fear because the shots remind me of being locked in autopsy with Ari, I barely notice what is happening around me. Gibbs moves over to where I am kneeling and pulls me into his arms without commenting.

“Yeah, I got one,” Tony answers without commenting on my state.

“That’s a good job, Tony,” Gibbs complements him while standing me up and checking I’m okay, physically at least. He whispers to me, “Come on, let’s go back to the office.”

“Are you alright, baby?” Gibbs asks me once he sat me in the front seat of the car. “Come on talk to me.”

“I… I… I’m alright,” I stutter out.

“What’s going through your beautiful head, baby?”

“Nothing.”

“Don’t lie to me.”

“I was back in autopsy with Gerald and Ducky and Kate and Ari. When does it stop?”

“When Ari’s dead. And he will be dead,” Gibbs answers me while making the promise to me.

“You promise.”

“Yeah. Come on let’s go back to the office. And catch this basted. Have you talked to someone about that night?”

“I called Rachel, she didn’t answer.”

“Who?”

“My older sister. She’s a psychologist. She doesn’t like me.”

“I’m sure she does. If you need to talk, my door is always unlocked,” Gibbs say to me while I turn around and Gibbs clips my into the front seat making Tony have to get into the back seat once he is finished flirting and giving us a private moment for Gibbs to take care of me.

“IT’S DEFINITELY FROM A FORTY-FIVE ROUND, GUYS. JUST GIVE ME A SEC TO LINE UP THE RIFLING PATTERNS,” Abby informs us while working on the bullets that we pulled out of the cavern behind the psychic as we all stand around in the lab.

“You run the plates?” Gibbs ask her.

“Came back stolen.”

“Figures,” Tony comments.

“The marking are a match. It’s from the same pistol that killed Lieutenant McAllister two years ago.”
“Why don’t we just drag McAllister in for questioning, boss?” Tony asks Gibbs as we all walk around the stairs to the squid room.

“Because his lawyers make more in one hour than you make all week,” Gibbs comments while taking a sip of his coffee.

“That’s an excellent point. So you’re saying I deserve a raise?” Tony asks us but we just give him a look that says ‘not going to happen,’ so he adds, “Or not.”

“We need more than circumstantial evidence to take McAllister down,” I inform him.

“I agree. But what do we get out of Kate going on a date with him?”

“A day of silence.”

“No, I get to search his house for that Colt Forty-five without him knowing,” Gibbs corrects me.

“But I want silence.”

“And if it turns out he’s our murderer?” Tony asks Gibbs while smiling at my whin for silence.

“That’s why you’re going with her,” Gibbs orders him.

“I’m meeting him at the airport in twenty minutes, Gibbs,” Kate informs Gibbs while we walk into the squad room and over to our desk. Kate straps a gun onto her leg under her black dress with brown lines on it.

“Hey, I need you to distract him for at least two hours so we can search his house.”

“It’s not a problem. He already invited me to dinner,” Kate informs us while walking out from behind his desk and move to in front of Tony’s desk and asking, “So, how do I look?”

“Eh,” Tony answers her.

“What do you mean, eh?”

“I mean… yeah. You look fine. What’s wrong with fine?”

“I’m going for hot here, Tony.”

“Well, in that case, do you mind?” Tony asks while walking around to mess with Kate, giving her the messy sexy look that he likes.

“Boss, I go the search warrant,” McGee exclaims.

“Yeah, you’re with me. Get you things,” Gibbs orders him while grabbing his stuff and handing my mine without a word.

You, no that… that is hot,” Tony comments once he is done with Kate.

“Are you two done playing dress-up?”

“Done,” Tony and Kate exclaim together.

“All right. I want a comm check in fifteen minutes.”

“On it,” Kate states.

“Hey Kate, you looked better the other way,” Gibbs comments making Kate clean herself up, back to how she was before. We all get into the elevator and I turn to Tony.

“If my sister so much as has a hair missing, I will make your life hell,” I promise him.

“Yes ma’am,” Tony says sarcastically as the door opens on another level making me have to step back for someone else to get on. I accidently hit Tony in his balls while giving the new people room, making him double over and drive my point home.

“My sister gets hurt, you get hurt. Whatever happens to my sister, happens to you,” I hiss into his ear.

“Uh… boss? Where are we going?” McGee asks Gibbs who is leading us around the McAllister house at night.

“We’re going around back, McGee,” Gibbs informs him. Once we’re around back McGee rattles the door knob but finds it is locked.

“It’s locked, boss.”

“Well, yeah, McGee.”

“That’s kind of the point of having doors,” I add before turning to Gibbs and adding, “You can learn from this guy. Lock your doors.”

“The last two times I encountered a situation like this, Tony threw a window Kate climbed in a second story window,” McGee states while looking for an open window.
“Huh. You don’t say,” Gibbs states while picking the lock. 
“Well, ain’t they amateurs,” I comment while watching Gibbs pick the lock and almost laying on his back to see better. 
“Let’s go,” Gibbs orders while opening the door and leading us inside. We move through the rooms in the house when we arrive in the office. Gibbs quickly opens the door once to see that someone is in the room. 
“NCIS!” Gibbs calls out while we point our guns at the unknown person. 
“Hey, do you mind?” Cooper asks us with a cigar hanging out of his mouth while I point my flash light in his face. 
“Cooper, what are you doing here?” Gibbs demands of him while hitting the light switch to turn the light on. 
“Same thing you are.” 
“We have a warrant,” I snap at him. “You don’t.” 
“Are you going to arrest me?” 
“It depends,” Gibbs answers him without answering. 
“On what?” 
“What you found,” Gibbs and I answers him. 
“I’m hoping a million dollars. I checked all the local counties. Thomas McAllister doesn’t own any handguns. But his old man? Bit of a gun nut. Even owns a Colt Forty-five,” Cooper explains while showing us the gun collection. 
“Recently fired,” Gibbs comments after looking over the gun. 
“Gibbs, Kate’s with him,” I hiss in fear while gripping my flash light tighter. 
“I know, she while be fine. Tony’s with her,” Gibbs tells me while pulling out his phone to ring Tony. He orders Tony, “Tony… take him down.” 
“Is she ok?” 
“Yeah, she’s a fighter. If she survived Ari, she can survive this.” 
“Are you okay?” Gibbs ask Kate as we walk into the lab. 
“I’m fine,” Kate lies. 
“No I don’t want coffee.” 
“You sure?” 
“I hope I’m getting overtime for this Gibbs, because I’m missing my cousin’s birthday,” Abby informs us while comparing the bullets. 
“Were they a match?” Gibbs ask her without commenting. 
“It’s the same weapon that killed the Lieutenant and shot up the makeup trailer today.” 
“Thanks Abby,” I say to her with a smile and walk out of the lab with Gibbs. 
“Abby, I need you out here! Now! How much time did you spend on this door?” Gibbs ask Abby once she arrives in the lab out of the office in back. 
“Um… enough to get the bullet’s trajectory. I was going to test for metal fatigue and age in the morning,” Abby reports with a smile. 
“Do it tonight.” 
“Please. We really don’t want a grump Caitlin,” I add. 
“Why?” Abby Questions Gibbs while smiling at me. Gibbs gives her the look that says ‘don’t question me,’ so she adds, “I mean, I’ll have it for you in thirty minutes, sir.” 
“Kate will help,” Gibbs adds. 
“I am so sorry, Abby. You have to deal with it,” I state while stepping out of the room so Kate can’t retaliate. 
“I’m sure you hear this a lot. I’m innocent, agent Gibbs, Todd,” Thomas say to Gibbs and me while we walk into the interrogation room. 
“We know,” I state.
“You’re free to go, Mister Allister,” Gibbs adds.
“Thank you for your time though.”
“It’s not enough I do your job for you, now you want to arrest me for it?” Cooper demands of us once we placed him in integration for a bit of time while we finished looking for proof.
“Ah, we do own you for find our missing Lieutenant for us, Copper,” I state while sitting down on the chair.
“The problem is, it isn’t murder,” Gibbs adds while sitting in the second chair that is in this integration room.
“Gibbs me a break, Gibbs. You saw the evidence,” Cooper snaps.
“I did. Brain McAllister died in a car accident. Tragic but it happens,” I state.
“The bullet fired into his car wasn’t from two years age,” Gibbs continues.
“The metal around the impact was only recently exposed to water.”
“Two weeks sound about right to you?”
“What’s this got to do with me?” Cooper demands of us.
“The reward was offered for finding the Lieutenant’s killer. In order to collect, you had to manufacture one.”
“I didn’t know what the hell you’re talking about.”
“It might have worked. We would have found that gun eventually. But you just couldn’t wait. What are you going to do with the money, Cooper?” I ask him.
“Hmm? Gambling debts?” Gibbs asks him.
“Retirement?”
“Taking those shots at Saleena Lockhart. That was overkill. Too bad we caught you putting it back.”
“Yeah? Good luck proving it,” Cooper says cockily.
“Ok, I will. This is an Instant shoot ID kit. It’ll tell me if you fired a gun recently,” Gibbs explain to him while I hand him the kit. He gets out of his chair and walks around the PI.
“Swab away, Gibbs. There’s no gun residue on these hands,” Cooper states while holding his hand out. I grab his arm and hold it down while Gibbs pulls the swab out to swab the private dick.
“Ok, a private dick like you… I’ll bet you were wearing gloves,” I comment.
“I figure any man who solves the unsolvable needs a trademark. And I’m betting yours is that tacky trench coat.”
“You probably never take it off, huh? Not even for sex or murder,” I comment as Gibbs swabs the coat and then I remove my hands off him and wipe my hands on my jeans in disgust.
“If this comes up blue, I’ve got you for attempted murder,” Gibbs comments while watching the swab turn blue. Gibbs adds, “Good luck trying to collect that million dollars. Get up,” Gibbs orders him while cuffing him.
“You think that’s going to last?” I ask Gibbs while nodding over to Kate flirting with Thomas.
“Maybe,” Gibbs answers me.
“That’s not an answer.”
“It’s my answer.”
“And here I thought she was married to Tony.”
“Last time I’m going to tell you, Tony. Don’t answer my phone, use my computer, read my mail, look through my purse, scan my PDA or touch my cell phone. Ever!” Kate snaps at Tony.

“And an extra side of hash browns,” Tony says into his phone before turning to Kate and saying, “Just so we’re clear, Kate. I didn’t do any of those things. Zero. Zip. Nada.”

“Then how did you know where I went to breakfast?”

“Logo on the coffee cup in your wastebasket,” McGee reports to her.

“Anyone invite you into this conversation, probie?” Tony demands of McGee while Kate turns and glares at Tony for going through her rubbish.

“You looked through my trash!” Kate screeched.

“Did you say it was off limits? Huh? Did you?”

“Why are you doing these things?”

“Sharpening my investigation skills.”

“Grab your gear,” Gibbs orders us while walking into the squad room.

“What’s up?” Kate asks him while we grab our gear.

“A dead sailor.”

“We didn’t get any calls.”

“Saw it on the news. Huh, boss?” Tony asks Gibbs.

“Hey, DiNozzo. For once you’re right. Come on. Let’s go!” Gibbs orders.

“Who’s in charge here?” Gibbs once we arrive while showing his badge while asking the nearest LEO.

“Lieutenant Cheney, sir,” A detective tells us.

“Finish this in ten,” Cheney says to the News people while walking over to us with a cup of coffee in his hand.

“Lieutenant Cheney? Special Agent Gibbs, NCIs.”

“You must be psychic, Gibbs. I just put in a call to NCIS.”

“Oh, not psychic. Just watch the news.”

“They monitor our radio calls. Chief says cooperate with the news media.”

Budget hearing time?”

“You got it.”

“What do we have here?” I ask the lieutenant.

“Not sure yet.”

“News said a sailor was murdered,” Gibbs comments.

“Maybe. Kitchen door is broken in and judging from the blood, it could be murder.”

“No body,” Gibbs and I ask him. Gibbs and Cheney takes a sip of their coffee in unison while I look in on the bloody kitchen.

“No body. Miller?” Cheney agrees with us before calling his agent who comes running.

“Yeah, boss? Right away, boss,” Miller a young man say while taking Cheney’s coffee cup. After a moment of through Gibbs also gives him, his empty coffee cup too.

“We got a nine-one-one from a telemarketer. Said he was talking with a Petty Officer Dion Lambert when he heard a struggle and the line went dead. Call was traced here,” Cheney reports while leading us into the living room of the poor victim’s house. I look around the room only seeing blood and many signs of a fight that could only have ended badly.

“Lieutenant, your ex-wife just called,” Rand, a young lady informs Cheney.

“Which one?”

“The nasty one.”

“You’re going to have to be more specific.”

“You want me to call her back?” Rand ask Cheney while Tony, Kate and McGee whisper to each
“No. next time one of my ex’s calls, get her name.”
“Lieutenant,” Miller calls while returning with two cups of steaming coffee. Cheney takes one and Gibbs takes the other.
“Unless you object, this is yours,” Cheney say while handing over the crime scene to us right before taking a sip of his coffee that is mirrored by Gibbs in unison again.
“No Objections.”
“Let’s go, Rachael.”
“No, it is! It really is! You can measure it if you want!” Tony calls out to Rand who just walked off after a moment of conversion with Tony.
“DiNozzo!” Gibbs calls to the distracted agent.
“Yeah, boss?”
“Trace evidence, bag and tag. Kate, sketch and shoot. McGee, lap top and answering machine.”
“Right,” McGee agrees while everyone jumps to do their job but for Kate.
“That was really odd,” Kate comments.
“Hm… what?” Gibbs ask her in confusion.
“You know, how you and him and,” Kate attempts to say but Gibbs just gives her a look so she gives up the lost course and begins looking for her sketch pad. She finally says, “Never mind. Tony, have you seen my sketch pad?”
“Yes, it’s in the truck under my seat,” Tony answers her.
“Under your seat?! How did it…?”
“I like those pants,” Tony comments while Kate walks out to get her pad to draw the crime scene.
“There’s no contact to sign,” Kesta, the telemarter, says on the recording where we hear the victim get murdered as we stand around her desk at the call centre. Over the recording we can hear a struggle and screaming and then it goes silent. “Uh… petty officer Lambert?”
“How many calls do you make a day?” I ask her when the recording finishes.
“Somewhere between three and four hundred,” Kesha answers me without caring.
“Do you every feel guilty calling people uninvited, intruding into their lives?” Kate ask her.
“At first a little. When you get cursed at a couple hundred times, you get over it.”
“Why’d you keep selling when you knew something was very wrong?” Gibbs demands of her.
“My boss doesn’t want us to stop selling for any reason. He’s got the compassion of a cluster bomb.”
“How did you get Petty Officer Lambert’s number?” I ask her in confusion.
“From a list broker.”
“How’d he get on the list?” Kate questions her.
“I don’t know. A magazine subscription, warranty cards, supermarket charge.”
“Supermarket charge?”
“Why do you think they give you those little key tags they scan when you check out?”
“For discounts!”
“It’s to collect information. They sell it to telemarketers. What brands you buy. How much. How often.”
“Isn’t that against the law?” I ask her.
“Anytime you write your name down, it’s going in somebody’s database and then being sold to somebody else.”
“Wow. Okay, well I’m going to need your work, cell, and home numbers,” Kate comments.
“All right, but please don’t call between six and eight, because that’s usually…”
“You said six and eight, right?” Kate cuts her off while taking the numbers down.
“Tell Abby I want a full acoustical analysis,” Gibbs orders McGee while handing him the recording of the victim dying.
“Uh… boss, you know that she’s working on Petty Officer Lambert’s hard drive, answering machine and all the crime scene evidence,” McGee reminds Gibbs.
“Then help her, McGee!” I snap at the idiot.
“Yes, boss,” McGee responds to Gibbs while leaving.
“You really think it’s a good idea for Probie to be alone with… I was going through Lambert’s papers,” Tony states while moving back to his desk.
“Something you’re good at,” Kate comments.
“There’s a second name on the lease. George Mansur.”
“There is no sign of a roommate in that house, Tony.”
“Well roommates move out, Kate. Sixteen months ago you had a roommate.”
“What am I? A dog?” I demand of them because I do live with her.
“Tony!” Kate hisses.
“Kate, Alice, you’re with me,” Gibbs orders us.
“Gladly,” Kate exclaims while getting up.
“Tony, find Mansur.”
“On it, boss,” Tony comments while reading Kate’s phone but Kate snatches it before following Gibbs to the elevator.

“The only blood type at the scene was O-positive,” Abby reports to us when we walk into the lab.
“Petty officer Lambert’s O-positive,” Kate comments.
“It’s the most common blood type out there, Kate,” I comment.
“I shipped a DNA sample to the Armed forces Registry,” Abby adds.
“The fingerprints we lifted his?” Gibbs asks her.
“Your missing corpse is Petty Officer Lambert.”
“Unidentified prints?” I ask her.
“I have not had time to run all the prints that you lifted yet.”
“Blood-splatter analysis?” Gibbs asks her.
“Okay Gibbs, I know you think I’m super girl – actually, my hair probably wonder woman or Isis or the power puff girl.”
“I’ve always been partial to Xena,” Kate comments.
“I don’t know about her. No self-respecting superhero should wear open-toed shoes.”
“Oh, I agree.”
“He erased his hard drive,” McGee comments.
“No problem,” Abby comments while walking over to him to help him.
“He used a D-O-D certified wipe program.”
“Uh-oh.”
“I don’t like uh-oh,” I comment.
“Uh-oh doesn’t sounds good,” Kate comments over me.
“It’s not. A D-O-D wipe not only deletes, but it overrides seven times,” Abby informs us.
“There’s no way to recapture the information, boss,” McGee adds.
“Why would he use something like that on his home computer?” I demand of him.
“Well, he’s an information systems tech and it could just be a matter of course or he could be,” McGee states but trails off after a moment.
“Hiding something. He wipe his answering machine?” Gibbs asks him.
“No. there were two calls. One yesterday from Blockbuster Video – late returning happy Gilmore. And one two days ago from Thrifty Phone Services.”
“All right, let’s hear it,” I order him.
“You, blood splatter,” Gibbs orders Abby who is jumping around.
“Yo ho heave ho,” Abby sings while moving off to do her job.
“Petty Officer Lambert, my name is Dennis Brough. I’m calling on behalf of Thrifty Phone Services. How would you like to cut,” Brough said on the recording.
“That’s it?” Gibbs asks when the recording ends suddenly.
“He must’ve picked up,” McGee informs him.
“If they called him two days ago. Why the hell would they call back?” I ask in confusion.
“Dennis Brough, Kate,” Gibbs orders her.
“Got it,” Kate states.
“Acoustics analysis?”
“Yes. On that next, boss,” McGee reports.
“Who was that who said always expect the unexpected?” Abby exclaims after having working on the blood for a while as we watch him.
“Me,” Gibbs answers.
“Oscar Wilde,” I overlap Gibbs.
Well, you’re right again,” Abby comments while smiling at me.
“Boss, you sure are!” McGee exclaim while running into the front lab from the back where he was working on the audio.
“McGee, you’re about to interrupt unbelievable news.”
“Abby, trust me. My news is much more unbelievable.”
“Gibbs, you’re never going to believe what I found!” Kate exclaims while running into the lab.
“Kate, hold on one second.”
“No!” Abby jumps in.
“This is really, really important,” Kate cuts in again.
“Abby, hold on, okay?” McGee cuts Kate off but then they all began talking over each other for the treat from the master. Gibbs places his fingers in his mouth and whistle loudly to get everyone to shut up.
“Hey! Abby?” Gibbs picks the first person to report.
“Okay, this is the blood trail found on Petty Officer Lambert’s kitchen floor. Notice anything hinky?” Abby asks us while pulling up the blood onto the plasma screen.
“There was no movement when the blood dropped,” I state while looking at the photo.
“Nope. Somebody stood there, dropped some blood, took a step, drooped some blood, took a step, dropped some blood,” Abby explains while demonstrating it without dropping anything but goes through all the motions.
“McGee!” Gibbs orders the next person to report what he found.
“The acoustical analysis of the phone call indicates that the fight sounds were unidirectional. I overlaid Kate’s sketch of the crime scene and found the source to be Petty Officer Lambert’s computer. They were sound effects, boss,” McGee reports.
“Okay. Kate.”
“I spoke to Dennis Brough from the Thrifty Phone Service. He’s home with the flu. His supervisor gave Dennis’ lead to Roland Kesta,” Kate responds while reading it off her PDA.
“Petty Officer Lambert asked that telemarketer to call him back,” I ask them in confusion.
“Between eight and twelve last night.”
“Our Petty Officer faked his own murder,” Gibbs and I state together.
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“We have on advantage over Petty Officer Lambert. He doesn’t know we know he’s still alive,” Gibbs comments as we walk into the squad room where Atony is still working.
“I’ll flag his accounts. Bank, credit, ATM, e-mail,” Kate states while working over to her desk to do it.
“Kate, this mojo faked his own death. Left his laptop, wallet, cell phone, and car behind. Do you really think he’s going to swipe the old charge card at the local Jugs-Are-Us?” Tony states at her.
“Tony’s right,” Gibbs states.
“Whoa, back up, did you just say Tony’s right about something? That’s not possible, doesn’t Fornell appear when that happens?” I ask Gibbs while looking around like Fornell while jump out from somewhere making Gibbs smirk at me in amusement.
“Thanks boss,” Tony says while giving me an annoyed look playfully.
“You check it anyway, Kate. You never know. If Tony does find his ex-roomie, check his accounts, too,” Gibbs orders anyway.
“I’m zoning in on him.”
“Yeah? You locate him?” I ask him sarcastically.
“Not yet, but I’ve got his driver’s license. Federal Tax Return, too. He’s a freelance computer geek. Made six figures last year.”

“Wishing you were a computer geek, Tony?” McGee asks us.
“Who the hell in their right mind would want to be you?” I demand of him while pulling my eyebrows together in confusion while sitting behind Gibbs desk like normal.
“I’d rather be homeless than be you, Probie,” Tony overlaps me in disgust.
“That’s an old address. Same as Petty Officer Lambert’s,” Gibbs comments while looking at the old ID for the missing roommate.

“He’s depreciating a ninety three Hyundai on his return.”
“How can you depreciate a car that old?” McGee asks us in confusion.

“More important question. Why would a guy pulling down six figures a year drive a car that old?”
“Only one way to find out,” I state.

“Fins him and ask him. Which I am trying… going to do!”
“McGee, you’re with me,” Gibbs orders while leaving the squad room.

“Where are we going, Boss?” McGee asks Gibbs.

“To talk to Petty Officer Lambert’s shipmates.”

“He’s not on a ship, boss. Oh, sorry. You were using a military euphemism.”

“You think?”

“So you mean Bethesda Hospital Computer Centre.”

“You speak their language.”

“You mean I’m going to interview them?”

“I interview, you translate. Come on!”

“Anyone else get the feeling that Gibbs treats us like dog’s he is training?” I ask everyone once the elevator close with the two agents.

“No I think about it, yeah,” Tony agrees with me.

“Okay, as long as it wasn’t just me. I’m going to see Abby,” I state while leaving the room to the back elevator and head down to her lab.

“Hey Abby, how’s it going?” I ask her while walking into the lab.

“Slowly,” Abby answers me.

“That seems to be the word of the day.”

“Yeah. So what’s everyone doing upstairs?”

“Tony’s looking for the roommate. Kate’s looking for the not dead man. McGee is translating for Gibbs at the not dead man. I’m bored.”

“I figured that at on my own.”

“So have you found anything on what I ask you to look into?”

“Nope but I’m working on it.”

“You know, it is sad that we found Ari’s identity faster than my father.”

“I know right.”

“So. Got any new tats,” I ask her while leading into her personal space.

“You show me yours and I’ll show you mind.”

“Nope. I have some dignity.”

“Right.”

“Hey, I only flash Kate’s boobs, not mine,” I state while waving my hand in front of my chest to show her what I am talking about.

“No wander Kate Loves you so much.”

“Yes. I’m the best sister ever,” I climb onto her desk and sit down while talking to her.

“I’m glade, you’re not my sister. I would have killed you already.”

“I don’t know. People like me. Just not people who have the same DNA with me, but their idiots,” I comment making Abby laugh out loud at my comments.
“Yeah, I can see that. Hey you want to go to a party this weekend with me?”
“What type of party?”
“Nice, answering a question with a question. I like it. A normal party. You know, dancing, drinking, and having fun.”
“Sure, as long as we are finished this case.”
“You are a workaholic, I swear you and Gibbs is made from the same mould.”
“Why do you say that like it’s a bad thing?”
“It’s not. Just funny.”
“You are weird. I don’t know why you are my friend.”
“Enough, Tony. I have nothing to hide,” Kate snaps at Tony as I walk back into the squad room.
“Really. For someone with nothing to hide, you seem awfully concerned about what other people know about you,” Tony comments.
“Why? Because I get upset when you go through my personal belongings?”
“Exactly.”
“Well, Tony, some people enjoy having a private life. Unlike you, we don’t go around informing everyone about the frequency of our… hooking up.”
“In a slump?”
“Yes she is,” I answer for her.
“Gibbs. Mansur withdrew six thousand from his bank account the week before he moved out,” Kate reports to Gibbs who is walking into the squad room and to his desk without her answering Tony.
“He’s also moved three times in the last six years. This last time he didn’t file a change of address at the post office. Thank you,” Tony reports to Gibbs next.
“Whatever the hell this is, they’re in it together,” Gibbs states.
“Yeah, well… what is… whatever the hell this is?”
“Find Mansur.”
“Yes. And we’ll find out. I know, boss. I’m trying.”
“Try harder,” I suggest of him.
“Right.”
“You know, Gibbs, maybe Lambert faked his own death to get out of the Navy. You know, wanted to make a few bucks like his roomie,” Kate suggest of Gibbs.
“Not likely. His enlistment was up in five months. McGee!” Gibbs states before calling McGee to order him around.
“Yeah, boss,” McGee asks.
“Check with Abby. Find out how she’s doing with that stuff you brought in.”
“Right.”
“Petty Officer Lambert was part of the team that was updating the Navy’s medical computer system. He’d been working on it almost two years,” McGee reports to us as we all step out of the elevator to find Abby waiting for us.
“Did you tell them?” Abby demands of McGee.
“No. saved the best of you.”
“Oh, thanks, McGee! You know how I relish the moments…”
“Stop relishing. Start explaining it,” Gibbs orders them.
“Okay. Geez, Gibbs. Five months ago Petty Officer Lambert buried a simple command in the program to send him drugs.”
“Lots of drugs,” McGee adds.
“McGee!”
“Sorry.”
“For every three hundred and thirty seven prescriptions, one was written for him. It’s ingenious in its simplicity, Gibbs.”
“What kind of drugs?” I demand of them.
“Painkillers: Percocet, Vicodin, OxyContin,” McGee reports.
“OxyContin is twice as addictive as heroin. It’s more addictive than pistachios,” Abby adds but we all just give her a look so she adds, “Well, have you ever just eaten one pistachio?”
“Actually, I have. Potato chip, on the other hand,” McGee answers her. But Gibbs gives him the look making him quickly says, “Uh… the navy writes a lot of prescriptions. So the amount that he was getting, there’s no way it was for personal use.”
“In the last eight months eighteen thousand OxyContin pills, twelve thousand Percocet, nine thousand Vicodin,” Abby reads the states.
“Legal price for an eighty milligram OxyContin is six dollars.”
“Street price is sixty five to eighty,” Gibbs comments.
“On the OxyContin alone, he made a million bucks,” Abby comments.
“Cash,” McGee adds.
“Petty Officer Lambert is long gone,” I comment.
“I would be,” Abby comments making me smile.
“Me too.”
“Two black coffees, one milk and sugar, and two Grande triple-pump half-caf vanilla lattes,” McGee says while handing out the cups of coffee he is carrying into the squad room where the officers from the crime scene earlier. Gibbs and Cheney gets the black coffee, Miller and McGee get the Grande triple-pump half-caf vanilla lattes and I get the one with milk and sugar.
“Cheers,” Miller says to them.
“Right.”
“No, mine’s the one with the extra foam.”
“Sorry,” McGee says while they exchange the coffee making Gibbs, Cheney and me shake our heads out him. We all take a sip of our coffee in unison.
“So Gibbs, I’ve had my eye on this one guy. He’s a lobbyist. Went from dealing to a few friends to supplying the Beltway with illegal painkillers,” Cheney reports to Gibbs.
“Well, syncs up,” Gibbs orders him.
“Miller.”
“Yes. Just a second,” Miller exclaims while trying to pull the file from his jacket without spilling his coffee.
“Here, let me help you,” McGee states while trying to help Miller and in the process they spill the coffee all over the file.
“My fault.”
“No, it was mine.”
“No, I should have been more careful.”
“Not a problem. Not a problem.”
“McGee!” Gibbs yells over the blundering idiots.
“Miller!” Cheney calls out to his probie at the same time.
“Idiots,” I state while staring at the two fools.
“Sorry, Boss,” McGee and Miller says in unison while handing the file over.
“Aaron Alan Wright,” Cheney states.
“Ever busted?” Gibbs asks him.
“Once. Dealing to his frat brothers at Syracuse. Got probation.”
“Why haven’t you busted him?” I ask him in confusion.
“I want the other end of his pipeline. If I bust him, his supplier just finds another dealer.”
“He’s soft. Want to bring him in here for a chat?” Gibbs asks him.
“Have Mosteleone and Rand pick up Wright. Deliver him here.”
“Sure, boss,” Miller says.
“Is that the seventy two thirty?” McGee asks while looking at Miller’s PDA.
“It’s the seventy two thirty,” Miller corrects making Gibbs and Cheney exchange looks and roll their eyes at the children talking toys.
“Sweat.”
“Yeah.”

“Petty Officer Dion Lambert,” Gibbs says in the integration room while I watch from observation with Gibbs and Cheney’s teams both watching the integration. “Sorry, never heard of him,” Aaron states. “A Navy computer geek. Steals painkillers from the Government.”

“What does a swabbie stealing painkillers have to do with me?” 
“He sells them to you. You sell them to your beltway clients,” Cheney explains to him next. “This really is a waste of time. I’ve advised my client not to answer your question, and he won’t,” Arthur, Aaron’s attorney states. “That is beautiful,” Monteleone states.


“What is this, bad cop, bad cop?” Arthur demands of the two men integrating his client. “Gibbs, we miscalculated,” Cheney says to Gibbs. “You think?” Gibbs states. “Our friend here’s looking forward to playing strip poker in Marion… without cards.” “Yeah, is that true Aaar-ron?” “Charge my client or we’re walking out! Now!” Arthur orders them. “Bastard!” Aaron hisses at the men. “Aaron? You won’t last forty eight hours in Marion,” Gibbs calls over to the Aaron who opened the door to leave. “Oh, I figure twenty four,” Cheney states. “Five bucks.” “It’s a bet,” Cheney say while they shake on it. At the sight of this Tony, Monteleonel, and I bust out laughing at the sight. “What are you laughing at, DiNozzo?!?” Gibbs calls out to us making Tony stop laughing in fear. “And you, Monteleonel?!” Cheney calls out making me laugh harder when he too stops laughing. “We didn’t break him!” “Made him piss his pants, though.”
“Oh hell, yes!” Gibbs says with a smile about that fact as Tony follows Rand out to ask her out for lunch or sex. And we all head to the squad room to work on the case.

“Gibbs! George Mansur – Lambert’s ex-roomie? He’s online!” Abby exclaims as she runs into the squad room.

“Where?” Gibbs demand of her.

“I back-traced his I.P. address to the Key Bridge Cybercafé in Georgetown!”


“But boy’s night out,” Kate complains.

“Which means… Girls’ night in! Transfer your phones to my lab,” Abby exclaims making us smile and do that as we walk down to the lab.

“Yes, now we can all annoy Kate,” I exclaim while transferring Gibbs phone down while Kate does the others.

“Is this the Petty Officer who faked his murder, Jethro?” Ducky ask us at Rock Creek Park that night while looking at the dead body.

“Unless DNA says otherwise,” Gibbs answers him.

“Well, he’s not faking now.”

“The shooter put on round into the back of his head,” I comment while looking at the wound.

“And his hair is burned. I’d say the muzzle was within two inches of his skull.”

“Aaron Wright doesn’t have the guts to pull a trigger looking you in the eyes,” Cheney comments.

“Well, neither does George Mansur. No, my gut’s telling me that Ducky’s about to eliminate him as a suspect. What time did our boy die, duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky.

“Patience, Jethro. Mister Palmer is at home with the flu so I’m my own assistant tonight,” Ducky defends his slow working.

“Gerald would have come to work with the flu, this new one is just lazy,” I comment making Gibbs and Ducky give me a look.

“Judging by the ambient temperature, I’d say he expired between eighteen and twenty one hundred hours. How does that jive with your gut?”

“Well, let us see,” Gibbs states while ringing Abby, “Yikes, Abby! What did McGee do this time…? When did Mansur log on at the cybercafé…? When you’re done with Neander-boy tell him to release Mansur.”

“What did the idiot do this time?” I ask Gibbs when he hangs up on Abby.

“Put his foot in it.”

“What’s new? She should be used to that.”

“Why does Gibbs always have to bring the killer down here?” I ask Gibbs when he hangs up on Abby.

“Do you smoke, Aaron?” Gibbs ask Aaron as they walk into autopsy.

“All right, you got me. All right? I lit up in your elevator. What’s the big,” Aaron begins but sees the dead body and quickly says, “Ah, geez!”

“How’s it going Ducky?” Gibbs asks Ducky without caring.

“Slow without an assistant. Is this the killer?” Ducky asks.

“I didn’t kill anybody. I don’t even own a gun,” Aaron exclaims in anger.

“Do you want to see what your bullet did?” Ducky ask him as I get off the autopsy table and standing next to Gibbs.

“No.”

“Did he just acknowledge he shot him?” I ask while pointing to Aaron then to Lambert.

“Sounded that way to me,” Cheney states.

“No, I don’t want to see this,” Aaron exclaims while Ducky moves to the head of the dead body and cuts the head open to see the brain.
“I can assure you it will be very instructional. Your slug penetrated the occipital lope instantly blinding the poor boy. Although death, of course, was so sudden I doubt that he’d notice it. It then entered the Corpus Callosum,” Ducky explains.

“Oh, god just stop. I’ve got to barf,” Aaron exclaims before vomiting into the basin.

“In the Eighteenth century, the Corpus Callosum was believed to house the soul. It wasn’t until the Mid-Twentieth century, actually, that scientists determined it’s a thick bundle of nerve fibres to transfer information between the right and left hemispheres of the brain.”

“Fascinating,” Cheney exclaims while Gibbs just watch Aaron throw up and ignoring Ducky like normal.

“I didn’t kill Dion,” Aaron exclaims.

“Dion?” Gibbs and I ask him together.

“Definitely someone he was on a first name basis with,” Cheney comments.

“Is that deal you offered still on the table?” Aaron ask us.

“Hell no,” Gibbs states.

“I know who killed him. Do I get the deal?”

“Not if it was you,” I state.

“I can live with that. I picked up the frugs from a blind mailbox. I sent the cash by return mail. The last shipment came in two days ago, and I dropped fifty grand in the mail that night.”

“He made a million and got whacked for fifty grand?” Cheney ask him.

“You cops always inflate. They never made anywhere near a mil.”

“What partner?” Gibbs ask him.

“I don’t know his name. I only worked with Dion. Wait! Wait! Just hear me out please! All right, his partner is a computer geek where Dion works. He picked up in the scam and he threatened to report it unless Dion cut him in on half. Find the partner, you find his killer,” Aaron calls out when we begin leaving him.

“I don’t believe him. If two of my people were ripping off the system, I should be fired for incompetence,” Wilkerson, a pretty lady, says to us when we return to the computer room where Lambert used to work.

“They weren’t both doing it. Petty Officer Wilson caught on to the scam,” Gibbs says.

“Well, if he caught on I should have.”

“They sat next to each other.”

“You’re not very computer literate, are you, Jethro?” Wilkerson ask Gibbs making me glare at her with a burning jealousy.

“Boss! Boss! He’s got a Trojan horse on Petty Officer Lambert’s computer. You could access his programs,” McGee yells out.

“I didn’t insert that!” Wilson, another computer geek, exclaims.

“Just once, boss, I wish one of these guys would say, ‘you got me. I did it,’” Tony states.

“McGee.”

“Sorry, Man,” McGee states.

“Ma’am, you know me. I love the Navy. I wouldn’t steal from it!”

“I believe you, Niles,” Wilkerson says while Tony arrest Wilson.

“How do I look?” I ask Kate after work after arresting Wilkerson for the murder of Lambert, on the weekend once I got dressed to go to the party with Abby. I am wearing a red dress with silver beading doing down the right shoulder to around my waste and ending at the bottom of the dress that ends at the top of my thighs. My shoes are red and my makeup is done to a tee making me look beautiful and sexy.

“Beautiful. Who are you going with?” Kate ask me while looking at my outfit.

“Abby. She invited me to a party.”

“Really? Why did she invite you but not me?”

“Because I’m fun and you’re not,” I answer as Abby honks the horn out front, I grab my red purse
and run out to her car.
“Hey,” Abby says as I get into her car.
“Let’s go,” I state while clipping up the seatbelt.
“Yay,” Abby exclaims while pulling the car out of its parking spot and back onto the road to drive to the party.
After driving to the party Abby parks the car and we get out to go into the party. We walk into the party with the music pumping through the whole house is packed with people dancing and drinking through the house and into the yard. Abby grabs two glasses of alcohol and hands me on of them to drink.
As the night drags on Abby and I continual to drink and have fun. As the night comes to a close, we are both to intoxicate to drive so Abby rings Gibbs to come pick us up.
“This is so fun,” I laugh at Abby while attempting trying to sit on the edge of the garden bed but I miss it and end up on the ground as a giggling mess.
“I know right,” Abby agrees with me.
“We have to do this again.”
“I agree,” Abby states while Gibbs ups up in his older Ute.
“What have you two done?” Gibbs ask us while getting out of his car and to help us in.
“Nothing,” I giggle out while trying to get up but falling back onto the ground in a laughing mess.
“Why don’t I believe that?” Gibbs ask while helping me to my feet and into the middle of his car.
Next he helps Abby into the passenger seat and making sure we are both clipped in.
“Because you’re a weird conspiracy theories person,” I laugh at him while trying to stop him clipping up my seat belt.
“Right,” Gibbs says while finally clipping my seat belt. He walks around the car and gets in so I am in the middle of him and Abby, and he puts the car in drive and begins driving to his house. The whole ride Abby and I are giggling about nothing.
Once we arrive at his house he pulls up in his garage and helps Abby and me out of the car. Gibbs leads us into the house and helps Abby lay down on the coach and tuck her in with a blanket to sleep there. He turns to help me upstairs to sleep my alcohol off.
“Can you keep a secret?” I ask Gibbs as he helps me up the stairs to his bed room.
“Yes,” Gibbs answers.
“I like somebody,” I state and Gibbs tenses up but I don’t notice because of how drunk I am.
“Really?”
“Yep. But I don’t think he likes me.”
“Why do you say that?”
“Because he is older and doesn’t look at me like that.”
“Just tell him? If he doesn’t like you he is an idiot.”
“I know he is an idiot. But I can’t tell him, he is my friend and I don’t want to ruin it,” I whisper to him while he sits me on the bed and goes to the dress to get me something more confinable to sleep.
“Well, if he doesn’t want to be your friend because you like him, he’s an idiot,” Gibbs whispers to me while handing me one of his shirts to put on. He walks out of the room to give me some privacy to change. I work my dress off and put the shirt on that falls down my legs further down my legs then my dress did. Once I am in the shirt, I lay down on the bed and snuggle into the pillow. Gibbs walks back into the room with a bottle of water and some pain pills for tomorrow.
“Sleep well baby,” Gibbs whispers to me while moving my hair out of my face and gently kissing my forehead before I fall asleep.
I wake up to a desperate need to use the rest room, so I climb out of the bed with a desperate pain in my head. The room is very cold and I begin shivering in the cold weather without the warmth of the bed. I use the rest room and move back to the bed and climb back in for a couple more hours to sleep off the pain in my head. Once in the bed I move around trying to get confinable but I stop when I hit another warm body in the bed. I slowly turn around to see who it is, I see Gibbs sleeping peacefully making him look years younger than he really is. I snuggle into his body heat to warm myself up, I
fall asleep against my own personal heater but before I am completely asleep I feel an arm move around my waste.

The next time I wake up, I am alone in the bed. I sit up but the throbbing in my head hasn’t gone away, so I take the painkillers that Gibbs placed on the bedside table the night before. I slowly move off the bed once the painkillers kick in. I leave the room and walk down the stairs to the kitchen and see Abby and Gibbs.

“How are you so happy? I am two steps from the grave?”

“Because.”

“Okay.”
“Mmm, I love Filomena’s ice cream,” Tony comments while teasing Kate about her date on Saturday, first thing Monday morning. “Filomena’s in Georgetown?” Kate demands of him. “My standard first date place.” “I went there on a first date Saturday night.” “Yeah? After dinner, I like to stroll the lucky lady down Wisconsin to this pretentious gallery called ‘impressions.’ Boy, they really eat it up.” “That’s where we want after dinner.” “Really? Huh.” “You’ve been following me.” “Me, follow you on a Saturday night? Not that desperate, Kate.” “I don’t believe you.” “Well, on my mother’s life I was not following you.” “Your mother’s dead,” Gibbs states. “I didn’t follow her, boss. I do know her boyfriend, Steve Adler.” “He’s not my boyfriend! I don’t believe this,” Kate exclaims in anger. “Did you tell her about your fraternity brother yet?” McGee asks Tony. “I was just getting to the good part there, McGee,” Tony states. “Steve Adler is your fraternity brother?” Kate demands of Tony. “I’d show you the secret handshake,” Tony says but then leans in over his desk and whispers, “But then I’d have to kill you.” “He told you about our date?” Kate hiss in a whisper. “Well, not the intimate details… until I asked him. Then he had to, ” Tony states in his normal voice but he then drops back to a whisper again, “It goes with the oath.” “Gibbs!” “DiNozzo!” Gibbs orders Tony to stop with that one word. “Jethro, I need you in autopsy,” Ducky says while walking into the squad room. Gibbs gets up and follows Ducky down to autopsy, and I sit down in his chair. “So, Alice what did you do this weekend?” Tony asks me. “Went to a party,” I answer him without going into detail knowing it while drive Tony crazy. “What type of party? With who? Kate let you go to a party unattended?” Tony throws every question he can think of at me without me answer or even looking up from Gibbs computer where I am filling out the reports from the marine who faked his death but died anyway. “Tony, why do you care? I’m pretty sure you were getting laid or masturbating so it doesn’t matter.” “Well, just because I was getting off doesn’t mean I don’t want to know about your social life.” “So you don’t deny that you were getting off in one way or another?” “No, I don’t.” “Well, there you go.”

“Possible ID on one of the meat puzzle bodies. A D A names Michael Grant,” Gibbs states while walking into the squad room from autopsy. “Hey cool! After six months, we finally got a lead, huh?” Tony exclaims. “Find out if he’s been reported missing. Kate, pull the case that Ducky testified where Michael Grant was the lead attorney.” “On it,” Kate exclaims while getting back to work. “Psst! Hey, it looks like we’re going to work late. So do you want me to call Steven and cancel your dinner reservation?” Tony hisses at Kate in a whisper. “This is a nightmare.”
“I’ll get everyone coffee,” I state while grabbing my gear to do it.

“Michael Grant disappeared eight months ago hiking the Appalachian Trail. His body was never found. Local LEOs could never determine if he got lost or killed,” Tony reports once he has pulled the file.

“Definitely killed. The poor fellow was then dissected into small pieces, put in a barrel of alcohol along with two other bodies, and deposited in a dumpster behind Naval Hospital,” Ducky states stiffly.

“Dental records matched?” Gibbs ask him.

“I’m afraid so, Jethro.”

“Ducky, remember a Judge Roland Davis?” Kate ask him carefully.

“Of course. A man of small stature and enormous ego. A highly competent jurist, nonetheless.”

“He was the judge on one of the two cases you testified, where Michael Grant was the lead attorney.”

“The significance of that, Caitlin?”

“He was reported missing seven months ago.”

“I’ll run a dental comparison 0 the judge with the other two bodies.”

“Pull up the case, Kate,” Gibbs orders Kate.

“Oh, yes. Of course. Who could forget him? Vincent Hanlan. A medical school washout. He was studying to become a… medical examiner. He was accused of raping and murdering a Navy Lieutenant who worked at Bethesda Hospital’s pathology lab. I performed the autopsy. She was a beautiful girl. I believe her name was Lieutenant Sylvia,” Ducky ramble while think back to his younger days, while looking at the photo on the report of the defendant, I felt so bad for him because I couldn’t do anything to remove his pain.

“Sylvia Waksal,” Kate cuts him off while reading the name off the older report.

“Sylvia Waksal,” Kate cuts him off while reading the name off the older report.

“Yes, that’s right. She was working late one night. Vincent Hanlan stalked with the intention of raping her. The speculation was that he was unable to perform the rape. His impotence so enraged that he proceeded to beat the poor girl to death. When it went to trial Michael Grant was the prosecuting attorney. Judge Davis presided. And I testified. The evidence was all circumstantial. So when the judge offered the jury second degree murder, they accepted it.”

“Vincent Hanlan served eight years in the Maryland Correctional Adjustment Centre.”

“Kate, start building a profile on Vincent Hanlan. Tony,” Gibbs begins handing out the new orders.

“Find the whereabouts of everybody else associated with prosecuting Vincent Hanlan and fast,” Tony cut him off.

“McGee, the last address for Vincent Hanlan. I want to bring him in. McGee!”

“Uh… sorry, boss. I already found him,” McGee says.

“Give me the address then,” I state when he fails to do anything else after reporting that.

“It’s twenty two Victor Road, Mount Ephraim Cemetery. He’s been dead over a year.”

“Well fuck. Next lead someone? I want to go home and sleep.”

“If you didn’t get drunk,” Kate begins lecturing me.

“You got drunk?” Tony cuts her off.

“You wouldn’t be so tired now.”

“I wouldn’t have gone out with Abby and got drunk if you wasn’t so boring,” I defend myself.

“You went out and got drunk with Abby?” Tony asks again.

“Wow, you’re stuck on that again. Yes I got drunk but in my defence, it was fun until the next morning.”

“Crown, crown, match, match, filing, filing, match. As we feared, the second corpse is Judge Roland Davis,” Ducky reports in autopsy while matching the dental records of the missing judge.

“Any guesses on number three here?” I ask Ducky.

“Carl Foss,” Tony answers me.

“The jury foreman,” Kate adds.

“Crown, crown, match, match, filing, filing, match. As we feared, the second corpse is Judge Roland Davis,” Ducky reports in autopsy while matching the dental records of the missing judge.

“Any guesses on number three here?” I ask Ducky.

“Carl Foss,” Tony answers me.

“The jury foreman,” Kate adds.
“Of course!” Ducky exclaims.
“Missing since last summer,” Tony informs us.
“His x-rays are on the way over from his family dentist,” Kate informs him.
“Are you okay, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky who is looking so sad.
“I assume this macabre play is being put on for my benefit. My testimony was key in putting Vincent Hanlan in prison. I was able to lift a partial print off her body. Thinking back, I think I was slightly unnerved by Hanlan during the trial,” Ducky sadly states.
“How so?” Kate asks him.
“He just seemed particularly agitated when I was on the stand.”
“You were the medical examiner he was never going to be.”
“I was using his failure against him.”
“You’ll stay at NCIS as much as possible. Other than that, one of us will be with you at all times,” Gibbs orders his friend.
“Jethro, my mother is ninety-six years old. She suffers from dementia. She gets very nervous when I’m not home in the evenings.”
“Tony, you’ll take the first shift… with his mother.”
“Uh… doing what, boss?” Tony answers in confusion.
“Whatever she wants. Have you never been around older people? Because their not all like Gibbs or Kate,” I ask him in confusion that he even has to ask that.
“I’m not old,” Kate hisses at me.
“Yes, it would be helpful if you could assist with the dogs,” Ducky states.
“Oh, gosh. I’m not really an animal,” Tony begins.
“Animal person, Ducky. I just haven’t spent a lot of time with them lately and…”
“The yappy creatures are all she has in this life … except for me, of course,” Ducky informs him.
“If Vincent Hanlan is dead, who is getting revenge?” Gibbs asks us.
“His family?” Kate offers them.
“I’m alright. But thank you,” Ducky says to me.

“According to their tax returns, Vincent Hanlan’s parents are both morticians. They’ve run a funeral home for the last thirteen years,” Kate reports back in the squad room while Tony looks after Ducky’s mother.
“Siblings,” Gibbs orders her to continual to report on the family of the rapist and murderer.
“One brother who’s a taxidermist.”
“Mortician, taxidermist, wannabe medical examiner. Doesn’t that make you feel better about our family Kaye? At least we’re mostly normal,” I comment.
“Yeah, the death obsession pretty much runs in the family,” Kate states about what I said while ignoring the bit about our family for the moment.

“Vincent’s conviction tore the family apart. His death pretty much put us under. Through here,” Fred, Vincent’s father, informs us while showing us around the funeral home. He leads us into the embalming room where his wife is working on the family, “Mary.”
“Get these people out of here!” Mary screeches at her husband while pointing at us.
“They’re federal agents.”
“I don’t care!”
“They’re here about Vincent.”
“They’re not authorized! Get out!”
“Individuals connected with Vincent’s prosecution have been found murdered,” Gibbs informs her.
“Good.”
“Good?” Kate asks her in confusion.
“Vincent was innocent. He was a good boy. He was in medical school.”
“Jack the Ripper went to medical school,” I state.
“When my son got out of prison, he had nothing left. No hope. No promise. They labelled him a sec
murderer.”
“What was he doing when he got out of prison?” Kate ask her.
“He was drinking a lot,” Fred answers her.
“Oh, that’s all you have to say about your dead son?!?” Mary yells out her husband.
“That isn’t what I meant. I was trying to explain how difficult his life was.”
“What happened the night he died?” Gibbs demands of them.
“He was driving with his brother and they hit a tree.”
“Can you think of anyone who would want to get revenge on the men who put your son in jail?”
Kate as them.
“Me! But I don’t know anything about it, so why don’t you just get the hell out of here before I call
the authorities and have you arrested and maybe you’ll go to prison! Bastards!” Mary exclaims in
anger.

“Couldn’t there be another case where these men worked together?” Jonathan, Vincent’s brother, ask
us while we are in the Hanlan’s workshop.
“I haven’t found one,” Gibbs states.
“Your brother’s case is the common link,” Kate adds.
“I would love to have stuffed Vincent,” Jonathan says before chuckling and continuing, “He
would’ve like that. He had a good sense of humour, Vincent did. But it’s against state law. Oh! Best
mammal at the regionals last year. Like anything else, you got obsessed. Becomes a way of life.”
“I thought pandas were endangered?” Kate says while looking at the panda who is stuffed.
“Oh, they are. ‘Re-creation category.’ I took two black bears and bleached one. And then I sewed
them together in a panda pattern.”
“Do you miss your brother?” I ask him.
“He’s my brother.”
“Did you two get along?” Gibbs asks him.
“When he got out of prison, he was depressed. He couldn’t go back to school. He couldn’t get a job.
He started drinking heavily.”
“You didn’t answer his question,” I state while pointing at Gibbs.
“We were close. And I have no idea who killed the men that put him in jail.”
“What happened the night he died?” Kate ask him.
“Vincent was driving. He lost control. We went off the road into the woods. My head hit the dash
hard. I stumbled out of the car. I fell to my knees. When I got my bearings, I saw the car was on
fire.”
“Do you feel guilty you didn’t pull him out?”
“I was told he died instantly from the impact. That he never felt the flames. I think he felt the flames.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone that is ringing, “Spit it out, McGee,” Gibbs orders McGee
but after listening for a moment more, he hangs up the phone.

“Victim number four, Jethro. The size of the pieces, the cuts, are all consistent with the bodies of the
D.A, the judge and the foreman,” Ducky informs us while looking at the body that was dropped at
his door step at his home.
“The homicide detective completes the team,” Gibbs states.
“You’re forgetting the medical examiner, Jethro, whose testimony put Vincent Hanlan behind bars.”
“That’s you!” Jimmy exclaims while looking at Ducky.
“Yes we know, we didn’t need you to spell that out. If you want to be helpful why don’t you
autopsy Air?” I snap at the idiot.
“Very good, Mister Palmer. He’s saving the best for last,” Ducky says to Jimmy while giving me a
“It’s not going to happen, Duck,” Gibbs states.
“Boss,” McGee calls out to Gibbs.
“You may load it, Mister Palmer,” Ducky says.
“Well, on could do that.”
“But I would personally use the trolley attached,” I snap at the idiot, because he is getting on my last nerve.
“Oh, oh, of course. I was so distracted by its contents, I didn’t notice it,” Jimmy defends himself.
“Here. Let me help with this,” The delivery man says to Jimmy.
“The guy, who works for an independent delivery service downtown, picked up the barrel from a new client on Twenty-Seventh Street. That’s the order,” McGee reports to Gibbs.
“Universal Scrap Metal,” Gibbs reads off the pick-up order.
“The owner called it in. the print’s kind of small. Even I had trouble reading it.”
“Print’s fine, McGee. Jeffrey… Jeffrey Winston.”
“Actually, it’s Jeffery Wilson. But you’re very close, Boss.”
“Are you sure it’s Wilson?” I ask McGee who is kissing ass. We walk over to Kate who is trying to cheer up Ducky.
“Gibbs is right. Whoever he is, he’s not going to get you,” Kate says to Ducky.
“There is only one thing better than looking into the eyes of a beautiful woman and have her say that everything is going to be all right,” Ducky says to Kate.
“And what’s that, Ducky?”
“My saying it to her.”
“All loaded, Doctor!” Jimmy says while walking back to us.
“You stick to him like,” Gibbs begins ordering Kate but she cuts him off.
“Glue,” Kate states.
“An ex0wife after an alimony check.”
“Gibbs, what did Ducky look like when he was younger?” Kate laughs through the question.
“Ilya Kurtakin.”
“The sweet smell of freedom!” Tony laughs.
“Mrs Mallard?” I ask him.
“Sleeping. Her usual afternoon fistful of wild turkey. Her last words to me were wither ‘I’m going to slit your throat’ or ‘kiss your moat.’ I couldn’t tell because she was slurring.”
“That’s good work, Tony,” Gibbs compliments him.
“Thank you, boss. So who’s taking over for me now?”
“Kate’s on protection detail with Ducky.”
“Yeah.”
“McGee and Alice’s going with me to interview the guy who delivered the barrel.”
“Yeah.”
“I guess that leaves you.”
“Me? Boss, I just spent all day playing furniture mover for this slightly demented old lady and her pack of yapping hounds.”
“They’re not Hounds Tony. They’re Corgis! Learn your dog breeds,” I state.
“No, Boss! No, Boss! I’m on the verge, man! McGee?” Tony calls out as we begin walking away and get in the car to leave.

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“Are you going to badge me? That’s what they say on T.V.,” Wilson, at the scrap yard where the barrel was picked up from, asks us.
“NCIS. Naval Criminal Investigative Service,” Gibbs says while showing him, his badge.
“I know what it stands for. I wasn’t always in the junk business. U.S.S. Forestall. Machinist’s Mate First Class.”
“Are you Jeffrey Wilson?” I ask him.
“This is about that barrel, ain’t it? I knew that deal was too good.”
“Tell us about that,” Gibbs orders him.
“Well, this dude comes in. He buys a few of those.”
“Where’d you get them?” I ask him while looking at the hundreds of barrels everywhere.
“Back of plants, factories. They don’t want ‘em. I clean ‘em up, resell ‘em.”
“Well, the dude brings one of them back. It’s got some kind of liquid in it cause I can hear it sloshing around. So first I thought it might be some stuff to make meth. He offers me two hundred bucks to messenger it someplace in Reston.”
“Probably didn’t give his real name,” McGee states as a hint to give us the possible name.
“No name, no address. He didn’t tell me what was in it. And I didn’t ask.”
“I need you to come by the Navy Yard, sit down and describe him to a sketch artist,” Gibbs asks him.
“Won’t do no good. Dude always wore a hooded sweatshirt and shades. He could’ve been Elvis. What was in that barrel anyway?”
“A human meat puzzle,” I answer him making him lose all the colour in his face.
“Ah! Gibbs, you scared me,” Abby exclaims when she turns around to see Gibbs and me in the lab behind her.
“Come on, Abs. you sleep in a casket dressed in a funeral gown,” Gibbs states.
“How do you do that? I can’t even stand wearing a dress in everyday life, yet alone sleep in one,” I exclaim.
“I don’t always wear the gown,” Abby states.
“Too much information. What do we got here?” Gibbs asks while ignoring my comment.
“Straight to the point. That’s our Gibbs. Okay, bottom line. The sicko that’s killing everyone that sent Vincent Hanlan to jail is definitely not Vincent Hanlan. Before Ducky went to see his mom, he checked the dental x-rays with those from the Maryland Correctional Adjustment Centre.”
“Vincent Hanlan is in the casket,” I ask her.
“Every last inch of what is probably very rotting flash at this point.”
“What about DNA testing?” Gibbs asks her next.
“Maryland incinerates all biological evidence three years after sentencing.”
“Okay, find an earlier x-ray. Before he went to prison,” Gibbs orders her before leading me out of the lab leaving Abby to do her job of proving it is the right body in the casket.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone while McGee, Gibbs and I sit around in the squad room working on finding out who is killing these people. After listening to his phone for a moment he hangs it up and turns to us, to orders us around, “McGee, Alice, you’re with me. Come on.”
“We all walk over to the back elevator and get into the lift to head to autopsy where Jimmy is but Ducky has already gone home for the night.
“These x-rays were taken at Vincent Hanlan’s autopsy. And these were eleven years ago in medical school. And if you look closely, you can see a perceptible difference due to molar wear, which is highly unusual given the short span of years, at least in modern tan. In Neolithic man, who used to gnaw a lot of bones, you know, it could incur these kinds of,” Jimmy rambles while looking at dental records.
“Are you telling me these x-rays match?” Gibbs cuts him off.
“I’m afraid so. The filings in the upper third molar and second bicuspid are identical, as are the shape of the teeth.”
“He gnaw on bones like a caveman?” I demand of Jimmy.
“I can’t explain that.”
“He grinds his teeth, boss. I did it as a kid in my sleep. Had to wear a special retainer at night,” McGee explains.
“You still should,” Abby informs McGee.
“I want Vincent Hanlan’s body exhumed,” Gibbs orders.
“Why? I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to say that, sir. It just... it just spews out,” Jimmy defends himself.

“Abby, call Mount Ephraim Cemetery. McGee, you’re with me. You dig up that body!” Gibbs orders and points at Abby for that last order making her grin even bigger.

“Love to!” Abby exclaims with a huge grin while we leave her to talk with Jimmy as we do our job to keep Ducky safe.

“Gibbs, I’m sorry,” Kate exclaims the next morning after she left Ducky get kidnapped under her watch.

“It’s my fault. Two agents,” Gibbs states.

“Excuse me?”

“Two protectees. I should have had two agents. You were as responsible for the mother as you were for Ducky.”

“Gibbs, Kate why don’t we blame the person who took Ducky or Ari? I am personal blaming Ari,” I state in an attempt of removing their guilt.

“Boss! Abby says the tire tracks from the ban were made from Uniroyal Laredos. They’re standard on Chevy Express cargo vans,” Tony exclaims while running into the squad room.

“Both the funeral home and the taxidermy business on Chevrolet Express Cargo vans,” McGee reminds us.

“That’s good enough for a search authorization,” Gibbs states.

“On it,” Tony says while moving back to his desk to get the authorization.

“Tony, you and Kate take the turkey stuffing brother. McGee, Alice, come on. You’re with me.”

“You have no right to invade my home and my business,” Mary exclaims as we search the funeral home.

“Actually, that search warrant says we do, ma’am,” McGee informs her while handing the warrant over.

“Don’t ma’am me you simpering wimp!”

“No ma’am.”

“Unlock this door,” Gibbs orders her.

“Ma’am, if you impede in any way, you will be charged with obstruction.”

“That’s not the way to do this. I have the right to breakdown that door, and anything my way,” Gibbs informs her when she just stand in our way.

“Are you satisfied?” Mary demands of us when she let us into the crematorium room.

“No. McGee, take a scraping from inside. One son beats a young women to death.”

“The other one plays with dead animals. I wonder where they get that,” I add.

“From their mother,” Mary exclaims in anger.

“It’s heavier. Definitely something in this one,” McGee reports while lifting each coffin to see that they are empty but one with the lid screwed on.

“Mister Goldberg. He’s being buried in the morning.”

“Check underneath Mister Goldberg,” Gibbs orders McGee who opens the coffin and searches for a second body in the coffin.

“There’s nothing,” McGee reports.

“I’ll inform the Goldbergs their grandfather was frisked by NCIS in his coffin. They’re litigators,” Mary exclaims trying to scare us.

“Good for them. Don’t tell everyone, they’ll all want to be litigators,” I say sarcastically without any fear.

“Boss, the van is on the way to the garage for forensics. What next?” McGee asks us while watching the van get loaded to be searched at the lab.

“Why don’t you just admit that you made a mistake and get the hell out of here,” Mary hisses at us in anger and hastily.

“Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his ringing phone, “Yeah, I knew you’d find something, DiNozzo. That’s good work, Tony. You bring him in for interrogation... yeah! Yeah, I heard you,” Gibbs says with a
chuckle before turning to us and saying, “Let’s go, McGee.”
“What’s they find?” McGee ask Gibbs who just ended his call with Tony while we leave the room to go back to the office.
“I already told you,” Jonathan exclaim in integration with Gibbs and me asking about his brother’s death.
“Tell me again,” Gibbs orders him.
“We crashed into a tree.”
“Vincent was driving?” I ask him.
“Yes.”
“You jumped out of the car?” Gibbs ask him.
“That’s right.”
“You didn’t even attempt to help your brother?” I ask him in confusion because if something happened to Kate I would do anything I could to help her.
“The car was on fire. I was in a daze.”
“But you didn’t even try.”
“It was too hot! There was no way I could get to him.”
“What did your mother think about that?” Gibbs ask him while gently placing his hand on my leg because I’m getting so angry at this dirt bag.
“I wouldn’t know. We don’t talk. We haven’t spoken since that night.”
“Yeah? Why is that?”
“He was her favourite.”
“She blames you for this death. If our friend dies, we’ll blame you, too,” I hiss at him.
“Gibbs, Jimmy Palmer and Abby need to see you,” Kate says through the intercom.
We get up and leave the integration room and enter the observation room to hear what they have to say.
“I pulled one of Vincent Hanlan’s teeth and gave it to Abby,” Jimmy begins.
“We did a blood analysis of the nerve tissue and compared it to the blood type of the tissue from the corpse,” Abby continues.
They didn’t match,” Abby and Jimmy exclaim together.
“These are Vincent Hanlan’s teeth, but they are put into this jaw. This body is not Vincent Hanlan’s” Jimmy explains to us.
“I did a gas chromatograph and I found trace of cyanoacrylate on the bottom of the,” Abby continues to ramble.
“In a language I speak, Abby,” Gibbs snaps at her.
“This is super glue on the root of the tooth.”
“Just a drop. It would never show up on an x-ray,” Jimmy informs us.
“So the teeth were pulled from Vincent’s mouth?” Kate ask them.
“One by one. And then they were glued back into this jaw.”
“So what you two are saying is we are looking for a gummy. Cool, though how does he eat? But it must have hurt having them pulled out just to fake his death,” I ask them but no one can answer me.
“Homo sapiens. Reconstruction category. Someone took your brother’s teeth and put them in that skull,” Gibbs says to Jonathan when we return to the integration room.
“It wasn’t me. It was them. It’s always them,” Jonathan exclaims.
“Your mother and Vincent?” I ask him in confusion.
“Vincent was drunk the night he slammed into that tree. We got out just before it burst into flames. When we got home, mother had a car crash body laid out on the embalming table. Closed-casket job. She came up with the idea of giving Vincent a new life. After she extracted Vincent’s teeth and put them in the car-crash body she burnt the corpse beyond recognition.”
“Where is Vincent?” Gibbs demands of him.
“With mother. He’s always with mother,” Jonathan cry’s making me feel bad for the boy who just wants his mother but he doesn’t get it. Without thinking I move from my seat next to Gibbs and
gently pull the child in a man’s body into my arms and let him cry onto my shoulder.

“Hush. It’s okay. It’s okay. Help us please. They killed people, good people. Don’t let them beat
you, please help us,” I whisper to him while rubbing his back in an attempt to calm him down.

“I can’t they’re my family.”

“They have someone who is like family to me. Please. Where are they?”

“We already searched the funeral home,” Gibbs states.

“Look harder!” Jonathan exclaims.

“Is Doctor Mallard there?” I softly ask him while trying to move away but he keeps holding me
tightly.

“Probably.”

“They didn’t keep you informed?” Gibbs asks him while giving him, his hard look.

“They have lots of secrets. Terrible secrets with each other.”

“You call your mother, Jonathan. You tell her we’ve release you. You tell her that everything is okay
now, that we had run into a dead end. You convince her, Jonathan. If you don’t, I will tear every
tooth out of your skull!”

“Once we have the good doctor back, if you help us you can go back to your animals,” I offer to him
when he hesitates.

“I got a light,” Gibbs says while we watch the funeral home for any sign of Ducky that night.

“Let’s go,” Tony exclaims wanting just to get it over with.

“Wait.”

“For what?”

“Let them get Ducky out of wherever they’ve been hiding him.”

“Now?”

“Not yet. Okay get into positions,” Gibbs orders before we all get into position, after a bit more
waiting Gibbs signs that it is time and we kick the door in and run down the hall looking for Duck,
Vincent and Mary.

“Where are they?” Gibbs yells at Fred.

“Turn around! Hands out! He’s clean,” McGee reports after arresting Fred and finding nothing on
him.

“Get back,” Gibbs orders Vincent and Mary who is standing over Ducky in the embalming room
where he has a needle in his neck.

“Move back or you’re dead,” I yell out them while aiming my gun at them. Mary and Vincent moves
over to the back wall away from Ducky and Kate moves over to them to cover them.

“My hands. Release my hands!” Ducky yells out us so I cut his hands free with my every present
knife. Ducky puts pressure on his neck but he continues bleeding so he adds, “Get me something to
stop the bleeding!” Tony hands him a piece of cloth off the bench next to him.

“Hands in the air!” Kate orders Vincent who picks up a scapple.

“I can’t go back there,” Vincent yells at us.

“Just do what they say, Vincent,” Mary orders her son.

“Turn around! Face the wall!” Gibbs orders Vincent.

“Just do it.”

“I love you, mother, but I can’t do this again!” Vincent says to his mother before slicing his throat
from ear to ear.

“No! No! My god, no! Oh my god no! Oh my god no! No god, they killed my son!” Mary screams
while staring at her dead son.

“Come on, let’s go!” Kate orders Mary who is crying hysterically.

“You’re the one that got off easy, my boy. What kept you?” Ducky ask us making Gibbs smile and
me laugh at the fact he almost died again but is annoyed for not coming faster.

“The mother finally give a statement??” Tony ask Gibbs who walks into the squad room carrying a
cup of coffee like normal.
“Yeah, short one. Two words,” Gibbs answer while walking over to me at his desk and I have to
move off the chair so he can sit down.
“So you seeing my frat brother tonight?” Tony ask Kate who is getting up and pack her stuff up to
leave.
“As a matter of fact, I am. Steven feels bad. Said he’d like to make it up to me,” Kate answers him.
“How’d he going to do that?”
“By telling mw things about you.”
“Never gonna happen. The fraternal oath is sacred.”
“Some things are even more sacred, Tony,” Kate reminds him making him look confused before it
darms on him what she mean.
“Alice. Alice. There you are,” Abby yells while running into the squad room making me looking up
to see the excited puppy she turns into.
“Here I am,” I exclaim while raising my hands above my head so she can see me.
“I worked it out.”
“What?”
“Come on,” Abby exclaims while grabbing my arm and pulling after her to the elevator.
“Slow down Abby, I’m coming, I’m coming.”
“This is so exciting. Come on,” She pulls me into the elevator with Tony and Gibbs following
because why not. Abby is so excited and they are noisy.
She pulls me out of the elevator before the doors are all the way open and straight into the lab over to
her computer where she pushes me down onto her chair.
“Abs, what have you found?” Gibbs ask her when she begins bouncing around without telling us.
“Wait,” Abby orders Gibbs while holding her finger up to shush him for a moment while staring at
the back door that leads down to autopsy that Ducky always uses.
“Abigail, you called?” Ducky as while walking into the room making Abby bounce even more.
“Abby, if you’re having an intervention, you have the wrong person. I think the one who needs an
intervention is Gibbs for coffee or Tony for sex,” I state.
“I ran your DNA like you asked,” Abby says while pointing at me before continuing, “Anyway, I
ran it and I got a hit. Do you know how it is?”
“Abby, if I start guessing, we are never going home. Just say a name, but if you say Ari, I am going
to hit you.”
“It’s not Ari.”
“Thank god.”
“Actually, it’s someone in this room,” Abby explains while pulling the DNA report showing us the
results making us all freeze in surprise at who it matches with.
“Actually, it’s someone in this room,” Abby explains while pulling the DNA report showing us the results making us all freeze in surprise at who it matches with.

“Does everyone see what I am seeing?” I question them while staring at the plasma screen in surprise.

“Yes, can I tell Kate?” Tony answers me.

“Nope, I want to do that,” I whine at Tony.

“Abby, did you double check this?” Gibbs asks Abby once he gets over his shock.

“Yes, I ran it three times,” Abby exclaims happily.

“So, we’re not going to have an intervention? Because they both really need it?” I ask

“Not this time.”

“Damn, well maybe next time.”

“Yep. So how are you going to tell Kate? And are you going to record it?”

“Probably. Maybe I should get a cake with the results on it,” I answer him making laugh at me.

“You alright Ducky?”

“Yeah, long day. This reminds me of a time,” Ducky begins to ramble.

“Abby can you print me a copy of these results please?” I ask her while cutting Ducky’s rambling.

“Sure. Why?” Abby asks me while printing it for me.

“So I can show Kate and maybe make her scream.”

“No fair, I want to be there when you tell her,” Tony complains like a child.

“Don’t worry, you’ll be there,” I promise him.

“Cool,” Tony exclaims while Abby hands me the paper with the results on it.

“Thanks Abby,” I say to her with a smile while we all leave the lab including Abby and Ducky, so that we can go home for the night.

We walk to the front elevator and into the car park together.

“Good night,” Abby exclaims while bouncing to her car.

“If I had that much energy I would be so happy,” I exclaim while pointing to where Abby bounced off to.

“Me too,” Tony exclaims as we all walk through the poorly lit parking lot.

“Do you need a lift?” Gibbs asks Ducky and me.

“Yes please, Jethro,” Ducky answers him while I just nod. We all walk over to Gibbs pickup truck and I climb into the middle seat while Gibbs hops in the driver and Ducky gets into the passenger seat.

“Are you alright? You’ve been through a lot within the last few days,” I ask the man next to me.

“Yeah,” Ducky answers me.

“If you need to talk, I’m willing to listen, as long as Jimmy isn’t talking. He bores me to death.”

“I’ll keep that in mind.”

“You do that,” I say though the yawn that forces it way out.

“See you in the morning,” Gibbs says to Ducky who is hoping out of the car once we arrived at his mansion/house.

“Good night, Ducky,” I mumble to Ducky.

“Night,” Ducky says while closing the door and walking up to the door of his house. Gibbs doesn’t begin driving the car until Ducky is safety inside. The movement of the car begins to lull me to sleep in the middle seat. As my body sycooses to its extortion making my head fall onto Gibbs shoulder, Gibbs looks down at my sleeping form with a small smile on his face as he control the vehicle in the direction if the apartment I share with Kate.

When he arrives at the apartment, he doesn’t bother to walk me up but just pick me up bridal style and carry me into the apartment complexes. As he walks into the complexes he see that the lift is out
of order so he has to take the stairs up to the third level where I live. At the door, Gibbs realises that he needs keys to open the door but he doesn’t know where my keys are kept. He searched my pockets and finds my keys in my front left pocket. He pulls the keys out and unlocks my apartment to carry me into my room. He gently lays me down in my bed and tucks me in like a father would to his child. He kisses my forehead and leaves the apartment without ever waking me up.

The next morning I walk up before the sun and head to the shower to freshen up for the day that I am about to begin.

After the shower I head into the kitchen to begin baking, I beginning mixing the chocolate cookies using an old family recipe. After mixing everything together I place them onto the cookie try and place them into the preheated oven. I set the time before cleaning up my work space then then I begin to make coffee for Gibbs and myself to take to the office. As I wait for the cookies to finish being baked I head into Kate’s bathroom to grab the dirty cloth out of the hamper and her go bag to take to the wash room and put a load on. As I finish placing the load on I grab the clean cloth and begin folding them up into two different groups, one for Kate and one for me. I place the folded up cloth on the end of Kate’s bed right as the alarm goes off for the cookies in oven. I place the cookies on the bench and begin making the icing for the cookies. I ice the now cooled cookies making sure it is very neat and readable. I place the cookies in the fridge to set the icing before cleaning up my workspace again and dry everything to put it away. I cook breakfast for Kate and myself as I hear her alarm go off to get up for work. Kate some stumbling out of her room, half asleep and straight to the coffee.

“Morning,” I happily say to the zombie.

“Morning,” Kate mumbles at me but I am used to it.

“I make breakfast,” I exclaim while place the two full plates on the table. On each plate there is bacon, sausage, eggs, tomato, and toast.

“Thanks,” She mumbles while sitting down and almost face palming into the food.

“You’re welcome,” I state while sitting down and beginning to eat the food I make. We eat in silence because I know that Kate is not understandable without her morning coffee and breakfast. After breakfast we both take our plates out and Kate washes the dishes while I dry up and put it away. Kate heads off to get dressed while I pack the cookies and coffee to leave to the office.

“Ready to go?” Kate asks me fifteen minutes later once she is dressed.

“Yep,” I say while picking up the cookies and two coffee thermos.

“What do you have there?”

“A surprise.”

“For who?”

“Your boyfriend… Wait… Nope, sorry wrong guy, I mean Tony,” I exclaim while climbing the stairs down to the ground floor making Kate glare at me for calling Tony her boyfriend again.

“He’s not my boyfriend.”

“Right… just a guy you want to have sex with.”

“Eww. I don’t want have sex… sex with Tony,” Kate exclaims as we climb into her car.

“Right. Keep telling yourself that.”

“I don’t.”

“Right.”

“I don’t. I’m not arguing with you about this. Obviously you have already made up your mind.”

“Yep. I mean you did have a paternity test with him.”

“That was for work,” Kate hisses at me.

“That’s what they all say.”

“Shut up,” Kate snaps while slamming on the brakes at a red light making my seatbelt tightening around my shoulder and nocking the wind out of me.

“Are you trying to kill me? Gibbs doesn’t drive this badly and he is insane when driving.”

“I’m not that bad.”

“Yes you are.”
“No, I’m not. Why are you so annoying today?”
“Because you make it so easy,” I comment when she pulls into the parking lot at NCIS. We get out of the car and head into the building. I walk over to the security guard and say, “Do you want a cookie?”
“Thank you,” He says while taking one and taking a big bit of the fresh cookie. Kate and I then head into the elevator. We arrive in the squad room where we head to our desk. I sit at Gibbs desk and log onto his computer after placing my bag behind the desk and the coffee and cookies on the desk. I look through Gibbs email.
“Interesting,” I comment while reading one of Gibbs email.
“What’s interesting?” Gibbs asks while walking into the squad room.
“Apparently, your subscription for the busty women porno site is active.”
“What?”
“I think, either Tony is using your email or you are being scammed,” I inform him while deleting the email. I pick up one of the thermos and hands it to Gibbs while moving out of his chair.
“Thanks.”
“No problem. Cookie?” I offer while picking the cookies up again. Gibbs takes one of my cookies and I move over to Tony and McGee to give them one each. Abby walks into the squad room, and I hand her one of the cookies as well. Next I walk over to Kate and reach into the box and pull out the only cupcake. I hand her the cupcake making her give me a suspicion look but still take a big bit out of it. She pulls a face when she tastes something different in the middle of the cupcake. She pulls out a piece of paper out of the half she didn’t bit, and places the cupcake on her desk. She unfolds the paper and reads it internally. We all wait while watching her creepily.
“What is this Alice?” Kate demands of me.
“What?” I ask her innocently while giving Tony a look.
“What is this?” She demands while reading it over slowly. She looks at it for a moment before turning to me and demanding, “Why does this say Ducky is the father? The father of what?”
“Me,” I exclaim while pointing at myself like she doesn’t know who I am.
“Ducky’s your father?”
“When did you find this out?”
“Last night. When you were finding shit out about Tony. For sex,” I answer her.
“Why didn’t you call me?”
“I was going to but I decided to bake a cake instead.”
“Why?”
“It was like midnight. It was either bake a cake or show up while you are having sex.”
“Why is that always your excise?”
“Because I don’t want to be traumatized.”
“I wouldn’t traumatized you.”
“I don’t believe that.”
“Back to work,” Gibbs orders us when he see that we are not getting back to work but arguing.
“Why are you so annoying today,” Kate exclaims while I walk back over to Gibbs desk.
“I don’t know, why are you so boring?” I ask her while working on the case file from the last case. We all get to work while eating the cookies I made.
“Is this an average day for you? Because this is fun,” Abby exclaims while looking at us all in happiness.
“Sometimes,” Tony and I answer her.
“They are children,” Gibbs states.
“Well, I’m going to my lab,” Abby informs us while leaving.
“Have fun,” I say in a singsong tone of voice.
“Oh I will.”
“So Ducky is your father?” Kate jumps back to that topic.
“According to Abby,” I state.

“Hey Ducky,” I say while walking into the restaurant where we are meeting to talk about what Abby informed us last night.

“Hey, Alice,” Ducky greets me in return.

“Are you alright with what Abby inform you last night?”

“It’s different but you can’t change the pasted.”

“Well I suppose not. So I have to ask, how surprised were you when Abby inform us about you being my father?”

“I didn’t see that coming but it makes sense while she called me back to work after the day I had.”

“Yeah. Good ending to a bad day.”

“Yeah.”

“Are you going to your mother?”

“Yeah but I while break it to her slowly. She has dementia and gets confused easily.”

“Yeah. It was funny watching her treat Tony like a mover,” I laugh making Ducky laugh as well.

“Yeah.”

“But I suppose it would be nice to have a grandmother.”

“What about your mothers’ mother?”

“She doesn’t talk to me. I am the reason her daughter and son-in-law fight, so if I don’t exist they would be happy.”

“That’s not your fault.”

“Yeah, well tell her that.”

“You know this reminds me of a time when…”
“All right, Thursday eleven a.m…. I’ll be there. Ok, I promise,” Kate says into her phone.
“Oh, that doesn’t sound like fun,” McGee comments when Kate hangs the phone up.
“No, I’ve cancelled my appointment three times.”
“What’s not fun?” Tony ask while walking into the squad room.
“Nothing.”
“Who’s Doctor Jackson?” Tony ask Kate while reading her paperwork from upside down.
“You read that upside down?”
“You can’t?” I ask her in surprise at the fact she can’t read upside down.
“A talent that serves me well. What’s wrong with you?” Tony ask Kate while grinning at me.
“Don’t you mean what is right with her?”
“Well, he’s a dentist,” Kate answers him while throwing paper at my head.
“Ooh, and our Ms Todd is afraid of dentists,” Tony exclaims.
“Who talk you that?” Kate demands while glaring at me.
“Don’t look at me, I’m innocent,” I defend myself with throwing the paper back.
“Why don’t I believe that?”
“Ethically, I can’t reveal my source. It’s the same person who told me probie wasn’t potty-trained
until he was six,” Tony states.
“Get the sedan, McGee,” Gibbs orders McGee while walking into the squad room with two cup of
coffee in his hand.
“Where are we going, boss?” McGee ask Gibbs while standing up and getting his gear to go.
“Not we. You. Apartment building in Georgetown. A women reported seeing a sailor being
strangled,” Gibbs informs him while handing me the second cup of coffee while signalling me to get
up out of his chair.
“Me? Alone?”
“Metro police don’t think it’s anything, but the women’s insistent.”
“What do you want me to do?”
“Investigate, McGee. It’s what we do. If there’s anything, call in.”
“Right.”
Our little boy’s growing up,” Tony exclaims.
“Cut it out, DiNozzo.”
“It’s a vote of confidence,” Kate states while trying to build McGee’s confidence.
“Really? You think so?”
“It’s a test. So don’t worry, if you are any good at your job you have nothing to worry about,” I state
making McGee look pale it was funny.
“Don’t listen to them,” Kate says to McGee and he walks away, once he is out of earshot Tony and I
lose control and begin chuckling at the dead body walking.
“This is going to be good.”
“Alice.”
“What?”
“Stop being annoying.”
“Stop being boring. And I will.”
“What are you five?”
“No five and a half,” I exclaim before sticking my tongue out her.
“Back to work,” Gibbs orders us before hitting my leg to tell me to behave and leave my sister alone
for the moment.
“She started,” I mumble while reading the next case file.
“I don’t care. I ended it.”
“Meanie,” I mumble with a pout.
“A root canal?” Gibbs asks Kate when she informs him that she has an appointment.
“I have an appointment with a dentist in the morning,” Kate informs him.
“Are you going to keep it this time?” Gibbs asks her before walking away.
“I can help you. I have a friend who had a fear of flying. He was cured by a hypnotist,” Tony offers to Kate.
“A hypnotist? I don’t think so,” Kate exclaims while popping another pain pill.
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his ringing phone while returning to the squad room, “Yeah…? Do we roll or not, McGee…?” Gibbs hangs up the phone and grabs his gear while ordering DiNozzo, “DiNozzo, get the truck.”

“Ah, is that the witness?” Tony asks while looking at a hot looking women who reported the murder of a sailor.
“Yeah, Tony,” McGee says annoyed at Tony already.
“Crime scene?” Gibbs orders him.
“Ah, second floor of this apartment building here. Occupant is a civilian named Thorne. Robert J. he’s not at home.”
“Let’s check it out.”
“I hope you have more to go on than her sweet smile,” Tony whispers to McGee while we all follow Gibbs to the possible-victim’s home.
“The police already checked this out. Thorne’s one of my best tenants. I don’t want to lose him. Is this going to take you guys long? I’ve got a meeting with my doctoral committee,” the manager, Jeremy informs us while letting us into the apartment.
“When was the last time you saw Mister Thorne?” Gibbs asks him.
“I don’t know. About a week ago? He travels a lot.”
“We can let ourselves out,” I inform the manager and close the door in his face when he went to enter the apartment.
“You made the call. What were you basing your decision on?” Gibbs questions McGee.
“We’ve all seen he credentials,” Tony mumbles to Kate and myself.
“That’s it?” I ask him in disbelief that is the reason we’re here.
“No, no, to get a closer look at the assault, Erin used a camcorder with a two hundred to one zoom lens,” McGee adds to her report.
Let’s see the video,” Gibbs orders.
“Well, she didn’t actually start recording until after the men had moved away from the window. But it does show that the lights were on. When Metro Police got here, they were off.”
“That would do it for me,” Tony comments.
“Really. Because everything does it for you,” I state making Tony give me a look.
“There’s one thing I’ve learned from you. It’s that sometimes an agent has to go with their gut,” McGee defends himself.
“Okay. What would you do now, McGee?” Gibbs asks the probie.
“I’ll dust for prints,” Kate jumps in while doing it.
“I’ll shoot,” Tony adds.
“McGee? Or Ari?” I ask Tony with a smile.
“We’re not going to spend a lot of time on this,” Gibbs informs McGee who is looking very nervous, more than normal and he is always nervous.

“Photos from the scene of the crime. Annual performance reviews are next week,” Tony says to freak McGee out.
“Two sailors in the national capital region were reported UA today. One female. I’m getting the particulars on the other,” Kate reports to Gibbs as McGee’s phone beings ringing.
“McGee,” McGee answers the phone, “Did you get a match?”
“Put her on the speaker,” Gibbs orders him making McGee rush to put the phone on speaker so we can all hear Abby.
“I ran the only clean prints from the apartment through AFIS. It belongs to Petty Officer First Class Keith Dillon, USN,” Abby informs us before hanging up the phone from her end.
“Is he you missing man, Kate?” I ask her making him glare at me.
“Dillon, comma, Keith. Sure is,” Kate reports while reading the email she has got about the missing victim.
“Boss! Boss, Erin was right,” McGee exclaims happily.
“What does that mean, McGee?” Gibbs ask McGee.
“Well, she wasn’t imagining it.”
“It also means a sailor may be dead,” I remind him.
“Kate, do a background on the victim. Tony talks to his C.O. Alice go get us some coffee,” Gibbs orders everyone.

“Keith Dillon. Thirty two. Single. Never married. Lives in Anacostia. Assigned to Pax River,” Kate reports while we all look at the plasma screen where the victim’s head shot is.
“What’s he do?” Gibbs ask her.
“Motor pool. Driver.”
“I talked to Dillon’s C.O. He’s still a no-show,” Tony reports next.
“We’re going back to Thorne’s apartment,” Gibbs orders us.
“I’ll get the truck,” McGee jumps in but after a beat he adds, “Uh… you did want me to get the truck, yes?” Gibbs just gives him a look making him jump to it.

“I’m going to enjoy this,” Tony comments while getting ready to re-enact the murder of our missing sailor with Kate in apartment.
“The attacker’s back was to me most of the time,” Erin, the witness informs us from her apartment while watching.
“Like this?” Tony ask where placing his back to the window.
“Yeah. And then he pulled the sailor off to your right.”
“Gosh, I can’t tell you how many times I’ve thought of doing this.”
“I dare you, DiNozzo,” Kate hisses at him while Tony places his hands on her to re-enact the murder.
“Oh, yeah?” Tony exclaims while pulling Kate down to the ground and out of the window view.
“That’s just what it looked like,” Erin comments while I watch Kate and Tony fight on the floor like children. Kate finally has enough with the fight and hit Tony in the sternum making him moan in pain while falling off of her. Tony begins sniffing the floor making Kate and I exchange looks of disgust.
“There are so many things I could say right now,” Kate comments.
“Are they the same things I am thinking?” I ask while stepping away from Tony who is still smelling the floor.
“Probie get the ALS up here,” Tony orders McGee while I close the curtains.
“Yeah, it’s urine,” Tony comments after ALSing the floor he was sniffing.
“Boss, tenant does not appear to have a pet,” McGee reports to Gibbs while looking around the apartment.
“Have Abby do a DNA analysis. In the meantime, we go over this place top to bottom,” Gibbs orders us.
“I’ll get the equipment,” McGee exclaims while leaving the room. McGee opens the door to find the manager standing out the door.
“Excuse me,” Kate says while leaving the apartment as well.
“I want all the information you have on your tenant Thorne. Contact numbers, place of employment, apartment lease. Everything,” Gibbs orders the manager.
“Oh, I’m just the manager. I call the plumber when the toilet backs up. The building’s owned by Hawley Street Holdings in Boston. They got all that,” Jeremy informs him.

“Can you get that for us,” I demand of him before shutting the door in his face again.

“Clear,” Tony reports after searching the whole apartment to the best of his ability.

“Boss, I already vacuumed the couch for fibres,” McGee reports to Gibbs who is looking at the coach like it is the most interesting place.

“It’s a convertible sofa, McGee. I slept on one for seven months,” Gibbs informs McGee while folding out the bed portion of the coach.

“That would be after the third wife?” Tony ask but Gibbs gives him a look making him add, “That would be none of my business.”

“The missing Mister Thorne is even more mysterious,” Kate calls out from the bedroom where she found two boxes, one has a gun in it and the other is empty.

“And dangerous,” Gibbs and I say while looking at the gun.

“What do you think was in there?” McGee ask while pointing to the empty box.

“Drugs,” Tony offers.

“Oh! Hawley Street Holding faxed over a copy of Thorne’s lease agreement and rental application. Uh… you’re going to need Thorne’s permission if you want to remove property,” Jeremy informs us when we leave the apartment to run into him.

“When he shows up, tell him to call me,” Gibbs orders him while leaving the building.

“Well, I’m going to need a receipt,” Jeremy informs us but we ignore him and leave the building into the parking lot.

“Kate and McGee head back to the squad room with the coach while Tony, Gibbs and I head to the motor lodge where our sailor worked to question the victim’s CO.

After Gibbs brings the car to a sudden stop we get out and Tony begins flirting with a female driver. “You can handle something that big?” Tony whistles at the women.

“You’d be surprised at what I can handle,” the driver, Walker, informs Tony.

“Oh, really. Now do you think I could drive a truck like this?” Tony ask while pointing to the NCIS truck Gibbs drove over.

“Not much I can tell you. Petty officer Dillion did his job and that’s about it. Didn’t hang arounds. Don’t socialize,” Wade, the CO informs us when we ask about the missing victim.

“Had he ever been late before?” I ask him.

“This was a first. I waited until noon to report him U.A.”

“Did he ever mention a man named Thorne?” Gibbs ask him.

“Not that I remember. What’s happened? Dillion’s only been U.A. a couple hours, and NCIS is involved?”

“According to his service record, Petty officer Dillion washed out of seal training.”

“Yeah, I heard he rang the bell. Agent Gibbs, I’m his CO I want to know what’s going on.”

“We have a report of a sailor being strangled,” I inform him offhandedly.

“And you think it’s Petty Officer Dillion?”

“We found his prints at the scene. No body. That’s all I can tell you,” Gibbs informs him while Tony and the officer from before begin giggling to each other. Gibbs call out, “Hey, DiNozzo!”

“I gotta go. Check you later,” Tony say to the girl before running over to us.

“You know where to find me,” the petty officer says to him.

“Okay.”

“Get her number?” I ask him while we walk back to the truck.

“I wasn’t hitting on her and neither was petty officer Dillon. She was interested in him, but he has a girlfriend.”

“Did you get her name?” Gibbs question Tony.

“Meg. It fits a hot chick like that,” Tony say stupidly before Gibbs hits him in the back of the head making to quickly add, “Oh! You meant Dillion girlfriend.”

“Check out is place in Anacostia,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“I enjoy going to the dentist,” Abby informs Kate while trying to encourage her about doing to the dentist while standing in the middle of the squad room.

“What could you possible enjoy?” Kate as her in confusion.

“A little pain is a good thing, Kate. That’s why people put hot sauce on tacos,”

“What did the urine tell you, Abby?” Gibbs inquires of Abby while walking into the squad room with his coffee.

“Oh, all kinds of stuff. We had a really good talk. I was able to extract epithelial cells.”

“That’s human urine, boss,” McGee adds to Abby.

“What else?” I ask her.


“Male or female?” Gibbs inquires of her.

“Wasn’t pregnant.”

“DNA?”

“You’re never satisfied, are you? I’m working on it. And the ballistics from Thorne’s gun. But I found something interesting in the mattress cut out. Do you want to come see?”

“Be down in a minute,” Gibbs informs her before she turned and walks away.

“Okay. I need an assistant.”

“It’s not in the budget.”

“The name Robert J. Thorne has to be an alias. Nothing on his apartment rental application check out. His driver’s license, social, references are all phony. He lists his occupation as a sales representative, but the company doesn’t exist,” Kate reports while putting the information up on the plasma so we can all see.

“The owners of the building didn’t verify anything?” I ask her in confusion.

“He paid the first month, last month and every payment since in cash. Apparently, dead presidents are the only reference they needed.”

“Ran the serial number on Thorne’s sig by the manufacturer. It was sold fifteen months ago to a Virginia dealer. He works gun shows. Trying to track him down,” McGee yells out to us while running up to us.

“What’d you find?” Gibbs ask of Tony.

“Could tell when Petty Officer Dillon was last in his apartment. Bed wasn’t made, but from the looks of the place, it never is,” Tony reports.

“What about the girlfriend?” I ask him.

“Ah, indications are they’re in the not-ready-to-commit stage.”

“Indications?” Kate demands of Tony.

“Yeah. She keeps her cosmetics and her toothbrush there, but no clothes. And they are intimate, but not at the moment.”

“Okay, now how would you know that?”

“Gyne-Lotrimin. Jill Meyer has a yeast infection. I’ll call the pharmacy and get her address.”

“You may not admire his methods, but you gotta love the results. I’m with Abby,” Gibbs states while placing his hand on my lower back to lead me to the back elevator.

“Uh boss, can I come?” McGee questions Gibbs.

“Come on.”

“What’ve you got, Abs?” McGee ask as we walk into the garage where Abby is working on the empty box.

“Do I have to answer the newbie?” Abby begs of Gibbs.

“Humour him,” Gibbs orders her softly.

“There were trace of cocaine found inside the box.”

“So Tony was right. He was dealing drugs,” McGee comments.

“Maybe not. The traces were microscopic. So it could just be from hiding money,” Abby comments before turning to Gibbs and saying, “He calls himself a federal agent.”

“The US money supply is contaminated with traces of cocaine,” I slowly explain to McGee like he is
a child.
“I thought that was an urban myth,” McGee states confused.
“Gimme a bill,” Abby orders McGee.
“Huh?”
“Give me a bill.”
“A hundred?” Gibbs asks when McGee hands over a hundred dollars.
“Yeah, I like to be prepared for any emergency,” McGee defends himself.
“You’re such a boy scout. Money is great because the ink never really dries. One bill used to snort cocaine and then going through an ATM leaves minute traces of the drug on thousands of others,” Abby rambles while leaving with McGee’s money.
“Um… Abs?” McGee questions while we walked away leaving him to deal with her.
“Hey, McGee,” Gibbs calls over McGee’s ringing phone in the hopes of getting McGee to enter the elevator.
“Just a second,” McGee his the guts to say to Gibbs while answering his phone, “Special Agent McGee.”

“I knew what she saw. That feeling in my gut was right,” McGee exclaims when we arrive at the construction site where the victim’s body is.
“That feeling you experienced was lower than your gut, Probie,” Tony comments.
“That’s disgusting,” I comment to Tony while walking over to the crime scene with the two boys.
We walk into the crime scene to see that the body was in a port-a-potty, so I add, “And that is disgusting.”
“Oh! All right, Ducky, you’re up,” Kate exclaims after photoing the victim while scrunching up her face in disgust of the smell.
“Thanks, Caitlyn,” Ducky says to Kate while entering the port-a-potty.
“I’d have to be really desperate to use one of these things.”
“Yeah, wretched, aren’t they?”
“Looks like your missing sailor was dumped over the weekend. His watch and his wallet are missing,” Floyd comments.
“The killer didn’t know he was seen strangling Petty officer Dillon. He made it look like a mugging,” Gibbs comments.
“Makes sense. Any luck on tracking Thorne down?”
“The name’s alias,” I state.
“The kid’s got good instincts, though.”
“Yeah, you think so, huh?” Gibbs scoffs at that thought while I pull a face of disbelief that anyone can think that of the probie, “McGee!”
“Yeah?” McGee asks while looking up to Gibbs.
“Did you leave my coffee in the truck?”
“Ok, I’m getting it now, boss,” McGee exclaims while running off to get Gibbs coffee.
“Idiot,” I mumble.
“Keep me posted,” Floyd orders us before leaving the crime scene.
“Duck?” Gibbs says to Ducky.
“Oh, based on the lividity and blood pooling, the body was most definitely moved. The ligature marks indicate strangulation as the cause of death. These parallel lines suggest electrical cord. Time of death… twelve to fourteen hours ago,” Ducky reports while checking the body out for all this information at he is so good at getting.
“That would confirm the witness’ story,” I state.
“Yeah. Bag his head and hands, Mister Palmer.”
“Hey, do you want to help me with the grid?” Tony asks Kate.
“Oh… give me the hypnotist’s number,” Kate orders Tony through her pain.
“Here you go, boss,” McGee exclaims while handing Gibbs his coffee.
“What’s next?” Gibbs tests McGee.
“What?”
“How do we proceed, McGee?” I ask him slowly.
“Right. Well, uh… we’ve got to figure out who Thorne is and find a connection between him and Petty Officer Dillon. Probably the money. And I think it would be a smart move to keep an eye on Thorne’s apartment. If he doesn’t know we’re on to him, then he’ll be back.”
“What else?” Gibbs demands.
“I think Erin and the building manager should work on a composite sketch. Am I forgetting anything?”
“Just to keep my coffee hot, McGee,” Gibbs orders him before Gibbs leads me out of the crime scene.

“Hey!” Abby exclaims the next day when we walk into the lab and Gibbs turns her music off.
“Geez!” Gibbs complains about the noise she calls music.
“Don’t mess with my music!”
“How do you work with that?” Gibbs and I ask her in unison.
“It helps me to concentrate.”
“On what?” I demand of her in confusion.
“Fibres that Ducky found on Dillon. Definitely one from the truck lining of a car. I’m going to run them through the FBI’s M.A.U. database and try to narrow it down to make, model and year. What’s this?” Abby demands when Gibbs drops an application form on her desk.
“Thorne’s original Virginia gun purchase application for his SIG. see if you can lift a print off it,” Gibbs informs her.
“As soon as I’m finished with this.”
“No, Abby! Do it now,” Gibbs orders her before turning her music back on while leading me out of the room back to the squad room.
“I have a dentist appointment tomorrow morning,” Kate states as we walk into the squad room because she cancelled it again.
“You see the hypnotist? You weren’t going to tell me,” Tony demands of her making me give Gibbs a confused look about what the hell they are talking about.
“I don’t like crutches.”
“I hope you never break a leg.”
“Who is sitting Thorne’s apartment?” Gibbs demands of McGee while ignoring Kate and me.
“Special Agent Balboa. I’m on my way to relieve him,” McGee reports while getting out of his chair and grabbing his gear to leave.
“Did you find the girlfriend?” I ask Tony and Kate who was looking for her last night when I went home.
“She’s a piece of work, bit we did find,” Kate begins to report.
“It’s all about the money, boss. Petty officer Dillon told his girlfriend he was gonna be rich. A career E-six? It wasn’t coming from the navy,” Tony cuts Kate off to kiss up to Gibbs.
“We figure Thorne killed him for the money.”
“You think?” Gibbs demands of my idiot sister.
“What are you thinkin’?” Tony ask Gibbs.
“Where’s the money?” I ask them because we failed to find any money in this case.
“Thorne took it,” Kate answers me like it is common knowledge.
“Why’d he leave his weapon?” Gibbs questions her.
“He’s coming back.”
“You’re fine,” The EMT tells McGee who just found our victim dead in her apartment.
“Your boy witnessed a murder,” Floyd states making me and Gibbs glare at him for saying that.
“He was stacked-out in Thorne’s apartment,” Gibbs remind the idiot.
“Could he pick the killer out of a line-up?”
“You have a suspect?” I demand of him.
“No, but if I did, I’d like to find out if your boy could…”
“His name is Special Agent McGee,” Gibbs cuts him off.
“If Special Agent McGee could make a positive ID.”
“Get a suspect and we’ll see what happens,” I snap at the insensitive idiot.
“I’ll secure the crime scene. My M.E.’ll be here in about ten minutes.”
“She was my witness. This is still my case,” Gibbs remind the overzealous detective.
“A civilian kills another civilian? I do not think so. Nobody gets in here but our forensic team.”
“Mm-hmm. Right,” an officer agrees with his boss.
“What?” Gibbs snaps into his ringing phone as Tony walks over to where we are standing in the corridor, “Yeah?” Gibbs hangs up his phone.
“What’s up boss?” Tony ask Gibbs.
“Cancel Ducky. Let’s get out of here,” Gibbs answers him while leaving the crime scene where we were kicked out of.

“Bowers. B.O.W.E.R.S. Can you fax me a copy of the files? Great. Thanks, Lieutenant,” Tony say into his phone trying to track the first to murder victim’s case files down the next morning. He turns to McGee who is just staring out into space without working. Tony walks over to him and says, “Some advice? You can sit there and second guess what you should or shouldn’t have done and never get the answer. Or you can get back on the job and catch the bastard. The sig in Thorne’s sofa bed was used to murder a Carole Anne VanBuren in suburban Raleigh and a Thomas Roy Bowers in Baltimore.”
“Wow. Tony that is great advice, who told you that?” I demand of Tony.
“Any tie between them?” Gibbs ask Tony while walking into the squad room.
“Just the Sig. VanBuren was involved in a messy divorce. Husband’s a lot richer with her dead. Bowers was a tough union steward leading a long strike,” Tony reports to Gibbs.
“Both hits.”
“Sounds like it.”
“Have the local LEOs in Raleigh and Baltimore…”
“Fax the files. Already did, boss.”
“How’s the root canal?”
“How was the root canal?” I ask Kate at the same time as Gibbs as Kate walks into the squad room after the dentist apartment.
“Nothing to it,” Kate answer us.
“Thanks to?” Tony ask her but trails off to make her thank him.
“You, Tony. I have to give you credit. The hypnotist really worked.”
“Thank you.”
“You know, Gibbs, this hypnotist consults with police department on case of repressed memory. She might be able to help McGee recall detail.”
“Yeah? Why don’t we just use a Ouija board?” I ask her sarcastically.
“Hypnotism isn’t a parlour game, Alice.”
“You could fool me,” Gibbs says to her.
“Can we at least try?”
“No,” Gibbs answer her but after a moment he changes his mind and says, “Ah hell, why not?”
“Boss, I don’t think I can be hypnotized,” McGee exclaims.

“He’s ready. Now traumatic memories are permanent. The barrier to recalling them is stress,” Fox, the hypnotists say after hypnotizing McGee back in Thorne’s apartment.
“Well, McGee was certainly under a lot of stress last night,” Kate comments.
“Probie’s always under stress, Kate,” Tony reminds her.

“Well, with hypnosis we bypass the stress, go into the subconscious where the memories are. Now being here where the incident occurred will help,” Fox says.

“So does a dose whack to the head,” Gibbs comments.

“And it does work, not this fraud show,” I add making Fox glare at me.

“May I continue, agent Gibbs?” Fox exclaims while ignoring me. He then turns back to McGee and says, “Agent McGee, when I touch your forehead, you will open your eyes and remain fully relaxed. It will be last night when you were talking to Erin on your cell phone. You will see and hear everything clearly.”

“What is it?” McGee randomly says while I lead against the wall in disbelief that anyone can believe this.

“What’s happening?”

“She’s heard a sound. She’s scared.”

“What is she saying?”

“She’s talking low. Sounds frightened.”

“Her exact words.”

“Someone’s trying to break into my apartment.”

“What did you do?”

“I went to the window.”

“Do it,” Fox orders McGee who then walks over to the window that faces Erin’s apartment, the very window that started this who case because she saw a murder through it. He then adds, “What did you see?”

“Erin’s being assaulted. I have to help her.”

“Just stay with this feeling. Are you looking at the attacker’s face? Describe it.”

“I can’t see him.”

“How is he dressed?”

“Jumpsuit. Hooded jacket.”

“What else can you see?”

“His hands. Putting something around her throat,” McGee exclaims while Gibbs phone begins ringing.

“Hold on,” Gibbs orders the person on the other side of the phone.

“A watch.”

“Describe the watch,” Fox orders McGee.

“Large. On his right wrist. I’ve got to help her.”

“It’s all right. You’re going to sit down. When I touch your forehead, you will be fully aware. Your memory sharp and clear,” Fox orders McGee before removing him from under his spell.

“Yeah, go ahead,” Gibbs orders the other person on his phone, “Just say it, will you, Abs…? You ran it through AFIS…? Why not…? Good work, Abs,” Gibbs says to her before ending the call and turning to Fox, “Can you please give us a minute, please?”

“Sure, no problem,” Fox says while leaving the apartment.

“Abby found Thorne.”

“Where?” Kate inquires of Gibbs.

“In Ducky’s cold storage vault.”

“He’s dead?” Tony asks in surprise.

“I don’t… I don’t understand,” Kate exclaims in confusion.

“Abby matched the print taken from Dillon’s corpse to one taken from Thorne’s gun application. Petty officer Dillon and Thorne are the same guy,” Gibbs explains to us.

“Dillon was the hit man?” Tony asks.

“He probably used the name Thorne when he was hired to kill those two people.”

“A macho, washed-out SEAL, trying to prove his worth,” I state while thinking it over.

“Creates a fictitious persona, Thorne, to freelance as a killer.”

“If there’s no Thorne, who murdered Erin and Dillon?” McGee asks the question we’re all thinking.
“Whoever stole the money from the sofa.”

“Boss, the killer was wearing his watch on his right wrist,” McGee exclaims before leaving the apartment and running down to the manager’s apartment. We all follow him and arrive as he pounds on the door but on one answers the door. The manager comes walking down the hallway carrying a bag of groceries.

“Hey, what’s going on?” Jeremy, the manager, asks us but after a beat he adds, “Hey, did you guys find Thorne?”

“Yeah, we found him,” Gibbs answers him slightly.

“You bastard! You wear your watch on your right hand,” McGee exclaims while looking down at the hand holding the bag.

“A lot of people do,” Jeremy defends himself.

“You have the keys to Thorne’s apartment.”

“I’m the manager. I’ve got keys to all the apartment.”

“Did Detective Floyd tell you that the young women across the street witnessed the murder in Thorne’s apartment?” I ask him.

“We’re going to match the fibres found on Dillon’s body to the trunk fibres in your car. What do you think about that?” Gibbs adds making Jeremy look scared before shoving his groceries into Tony’s arms and running off. McGee runs out to him and puts his knee into Jeremy’s back while pointing his gun at him.

“No! No! No! No! Don’t! Don’t! Don’t!” Jeremy exclaims while McGee tries to work up the carriage to shot him.

“McGee! If you’re gonna shoot him, you should have done it while he was running!” Gibbs informs McGee while taking control of the arrest, “Turn over!” Gibbs turns Jeremy over and cuffs him.

“You are so,” Kate begins to complain about Tony who is playing with his food at his desk.

“Coordinated,” Tony offers her while cutting her off.

“Adolescent.”

“I prefer the term ‘fun-loving.’ Oh! Ooh! Oh, hey! Food fight!” Tony exclaims before throwing his takeout at Kate who throw her carrots back at him.

“Guys. Guys! Guys! Please, I’m trying to write,” McGee exclaims after a few minutes, stopping the food fight.

“Sorry, McGee,” Kate apologizes.

“Need any help?” Tony offers him.

“No thank you. Just some quiet,” McGee exclaims.

“No problema. Shh!” Tony whispers before yelling, “Remember your first,” Tony begins but McGee glares at him so he begins whispering again, “Remember your first report, Kate?”

“Yes! Gibbs made me rewrite it twice. I felt like I was in grammar school again. Are you going to pick up those carrot sticks?” Kate answers him.

“I didn’t throw any carrot sticks.”

“I can’t stand working in a pig sty.”

“Well, it’s a good thing you don’t work from your bedroom,” I comment making Kate glare at me.

“He only made you redo it twice?” Tony chokes out once that fact sinks into his thick head.

“I forgot to spell check,” Kate defends herself.

“How many times, Tony?” I ask him with an innocent smile.

“Can I catch a peanut in my mouth without missing?” Tony attempts to change the conversation.

“Ah. Did you have to redo your first report for Gibbs?” Kate question him.

“A few.”

“What’s a few?”

“Five. It would have been more but I took pity on him,” Gibbs informs us while walking into the squad room and signalling for me to get out of his chair.

“Ooh!”
“Only five. I would have kept him going, he deserves all the pain you can give him,” I inform Gibbs with a straight face as McGee hands Gibbs his report.

“McGee, good job. Send it up to the Director,” Gibbs complements McGee.

“Will do, Boss,” McGee says while moving back to his desk.

“Any more food fights in here I’m joining in with peas.”

“Frozen peas?” Kate ask him.

“Nope. In the can.”


“It’s a sympathy note,” Kate realize what McGee’s been working on.

“That’s nice, McGee.”

That’s very nice.”
“He did that? Yeah? You’re kidding. Well, I wouldn’t put it in my romantic column, Deb. Definitely kinky. Maybe affectionately odd. But I mean, I don’t find anything romantic about having sex with,” Kate talks into her phone but notices that Tony and I am listening into her phone conversation. Kate adds to her friend, “I’ll call you back later.”
“Sex with a what?” Tony question Kate once she hangs up her phone call.
“None of your business.”
“Another women?”
“Go back to your desk,” Kate orders Tony because he has made his way over to her desk.
“Another man?” I add making her glare at me.
“I told you.”
“Some kind of root vegetable?” Tony ask her next.
“You’re disgusting.”
“Wasn’t me having a conversation about kinky sex, Kate.”
“At work,” I add.
“It was a private conversation, Tony, Alice, something you two seem to have a difficult time with,” Kate hisses at us.
“If I’d been having that conversation, you’d accuse me of being a Neanderthal,” Tony reminds her.
“Well, that doesn’t require a conversation, Tony.”
“You know what I think, Kate? I think there’s a secret side to you. A spike Steele video kind of side. Keep it hidden under your mattress.”
“Leave now,” Kate orders him.
“Ah, you’re a spike steel fan, aren’t you, probie?” Tony ask McGee who is working and ignoring the show at Kate’s desk.
“What, the porn star?” McGee ask Tony in confusion.
“No, the physicist.”
“Oh, no not really. He looks kind of sleazy.”
“Actually he looks a little bit like Tony,” Kate comments.
“He looks a lot like Tony,” I comment making Kate glare at me.
“Oh, you have no idea how much he looks like me. Kate, how do you know what he looks like? Actually, Alice how the hell do you know what he looks like?” Tony demands of us.
“I saw him on the news when he was arrested a few years ago. How do you know what he looks like?” Kate answers Tony then questions me but I just smile innocently at her.
“Really. Spike Steel’s real name is Jay McMann. And according to the National Crime Database he’s never been arrested. Ever,” Tony informs Kate after doing a quick background check.
“What’re you waiting for, DiNozzo?” Gibbs ask Tony after walking into the squad room and giving Tony the keys to the truck.
Uh…”
“Gas the truck.”
“I knew that.”
“McGee, get Ducky.”
“What am I telling me, Boss?” McGee ask Gibbs while picking up the phone to call him.
“We have a dead marine in Shenandoah River State Park. Come on! Let’s go!” Gibbs orders before we walk over to and into the elevator. Tony and Kate continue to stare at me waiting for me to tell them how I knew what Spike Steel looks like.
“What?” I ask while acting innocent for the moment.
“Oh that. I watch porn to get off, don’t you? And he’s ok looking,” I innocently ask Kate like we are
talking about the weather and not pornos.
“You watch porn. Where did you even find it? What did you even search?” Kate integrates me while Gibbs stiffed behind me but I’m more concerned about being in a confined space with Kate. She is going to kill me for this fact.
“Free porn. Why what did you search? He’s hot-ish, I was horny. It seemed like a good idea at the time. It was before we meet Tony.”
“You were underage then.”
“So? No-one waits until they are 18.”
“You watch porn?” Tony ask me with a pervy grin.
“You don’t? It’s a natural part of being alive. Everyone gets off, sometimes people just need a little help. Why am I defending myself to you of all people?”
“Sergeant William Moore. Call come in from his wife,” Kett, the ranger, informs us when we arrive at the crime scene.
“The friend?” I asks him.
“Sergeant Roger Caine. All camping together. This morning they were going to hike this trail. Sergeant Moore went ahead early to film the sunrise. When they couldn’t find him, they called us. Early in the morning, it’s really slippery up here. Sergeant lost his traction and slipped.”
“Are you a trained investigator, Ranger Kett?” Gibbs question him.
“Been working this park five years, Agent Gibbs. It’s as treacherous as it comes up here. Seen a lot of hikers go over.”
“This hiker was a marine,” I remind him.
“Yeah, well this marine slipped and fell to his death.”
“You said he was filming,” Gibbs inquires of the ranger.
“That’s what his wife said. No sign of the camera.”
“Me and my team can take it from here.”
“Thank you.” I say before following Gibbs into the trail to the true crime scene.
“What are your preliminary finding, Mister Palmer?” Ducky inquires of Jimmy while we photograph the crime scene.
“Ah, laceration, bruises, contusions consistent with a fall of this kind,” Jimmy answers him.
“And?”
“And uh… I would imagine that the victim has sustained fractures of several limbs.”
“Cause of death?”
“Impossible to say until we get him back, but from the looks of his head wounds, I would say that he probably struck a rock.”
“Cause of death?”
“Shock.”
“That would be my supposition as well.”
“But what I don’t get is the flesh trauma. What kind of wounds are these, Doctor?”
“They’re coyote. They would eat the exposed tissue first.”
“What’s second?”
“If what I suspect is true, the abdominal cavity has been chewed open. The liver and kidney are a rich source of nutrients for these creatures.”
“That’s gross, Doctor.”
“Well actually, Mister Palmer, we’re quite lucky here. In some cases they chew off the head and carry it away so they won’t have to fight other coyote for it. My coroner friend in Los Angeles says coyotes take it ‘to go.’ They’re very strange in Los Angeles.”
“Anything unusual, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky.
“Not really, Jethro. I’ll know more when I get our marine back on the table.”
“Boss! I found the camcorder!” McGee exclaims while looking at the camcorder that is smashed and in the edge of the river near the body.
“He was obsessed with the stupid camera. I gave it to him on his birthday. Maybe if he hadn’t, he wouldn’t have slipped,” Judy, the victim’s wife, cries while we question her and the friend at the camp site.

“Anybody else at this campsite while you were here?” Gibbs questions them.

“No, sir. Just the drunk, he was nothing to worry about. He was in a trailer over there. Scruffy guy. He was drinking too much. He got load. We ask him to keep it down,” Caine, the friend, reports to us while pointing to an empty parking spot.

“He didn’t keep it down?” I inquire of him.

“No, ma’am. So we went over there and tried to reason with him. That’s when he took a swing.”

“You took a swing back?” Kate accuses the friend.

“No ma’am. Bill put him in a head-lock ’til he calmed down and then he just took off”

“I don’t suppose you got a license number?” Gibbs inquires of them.

“No, point, sir. The guy was harmless.”

“Bill spends eight months in Iraq and dies filming a sunrise in Virginia,” Judy cries about her loose.

“That’s not the way it works, Gibbs. This thing has been in water for hours. You don’t just spray a little four-oh-nine on the tape and off you go,” Abby informs us when Gibbs ask her about the video from the crime scene.

“Tape?” Gibbs and I ask her in surprise because I assumed that everything nowadays was digital.

“Yes. It’s digital video tape.”

“I thought everything was a chip these days,” Gibbs comments.

“No, they kind of married the old school with the new. You know like new hip-hoppers will go back to old-school rappers like Sugar Hill Gang.”

“How long while this take you?” I question her while pointing to the camera so she can understand what I am talking about.

“I have to separate the cartridge. I have to submerge the wheels in a cleaning solution with the heads up against it. I have to remove the silt contaminants so they don’t shred the tape…”

“How long Abby?” Gibbs cuts her off.

“Um… Three maybe four hours,” Abby informs her but Gibbs gives her the look that normally makes her shorten the time but this time she just looks back at him.

“Let me know when you got it,” Gibbs orders her while leaving the lab.

“Hey Gibbs, do you have a camcorder?”

“Yeah. Digital, okay?”

“Good, Gibbs! Way to go! Did you make the jump to CDs yet? Because if you didn’t, it’s cool because all the hot DJs, they use vinyl these days anyway.”

“Just get it to me.”


“How does she still have a job?” I ask Gibbs through my confusion with Abby, because she has to be high to be that weird.

“She’s the best at what she does,” Gibbs answers me as we wait on the elevator.

“Northern White Ash. Ash tree are not indigenous to this area. And even if they were, you know any that have kiln dried wood and a lacquer coating?” Abby ask us when we return to the lab after a couple of hours.

“Lacquer?” Gibbs asks her.

“Yes. Clear coat.”

“Baseball bat?” I ask her next.

“Wooden bats are made out of either maple or ash. Ash is more popular, but it tends to splinter more easily.”

“Especially when they come in contact with somebody’s skull,” Gibbs comments.

“Somebody did a Barry Bonds on Sergeant Moore’s head, Gibbs.”
“Sergeant William Moore, transferred from Camp Lejeune to Quantico two months ago. He was serving as an E-I for all newly commissioned Marine Officer,” Kate reports when we all stand around in the squad room without Gibbs the next morning.

“E-I?” McGee ask in confusion.

“Enlisted instructor, Probie,” Tony answer him.

“Uh… What did he teach, Kate?”

“Well, according to his records, MOUT,” Kate answers him.

“MOUT stands for military operations,” Tony begins explaining to McGee again.

“Yes, I know what it stands for, Tony,” McGee cuts Tony off.

“Well, excuse me for trying to help junior agents!”

“Trust me, when I need help you will be the first person I ask… where Gibbs or Kate is.”

“Are you two done?” Kate ask Tony and McGee while Tony laughs at Tony.

“For the moment,” Tony answers her.

“Children. Both of them,” I mumble.

“These are the last two people to have seen our sergeant alive. His best friend, and his wife,” Kate continues her report while glaring at me even though she doesn’t know exactly what I said.

“Hey!” McGee exclaims when he hits him.

“Now I’m done. Continue,” Tony states innocently.

“Do you think that one or both of them could have murdered the sergeant?” Kate ask us.

“Well it is kind of weird a single guy hanging out with a married couple.”

“I agree,” McGee agrees with Tony.

“Why is that?” Kate demands of the two children.

“Well, because he’s a single guy hanging out with married people,” Tony defends himself.

“I do that all the time.”

“Yeah, because they are using you for a threesome to revive their sex life,” I comment making Kate glare at me and Tony laugh.

“Yeah, but you bring a date, right?” Tony ask her once he got his laughing under control.

“Not… always,” Kate answers him.

“Are you related to them?” McGee ask him.

“No,” Kate answers him again but after a moment she demands, “What?”

“Well, who usually invites you?” Tony questions her.

“The man or the women?” McGee adds.

“I don’t know, I guess usually the guy. Okay, a lot of my friends are from the secret service, and most of them happen to be men,” Kate defend herself and her friends.

“What about your… girlfriend who called yesterday morning?” Tony demands of her.

“Well, Deb is married to one of my buddies, Rick,” Kate answers him making Tony and McGee giggle at that fact. She continues, “Okay, so what you’re trying to say is that all of my married male friends secretly want to sleep with me?”

“Pretty much. Yeah.”

“I’ve been saying that for years,” I remind her making Tony give me a look that says he agrees with me.

“That’s very mature, Tony. And for your information, men and women can just be friends. Isn’t that right, McGee?” Kate exclaims in anger.

“Technically,” McGee answer through another round of giggling with Tony.

“What do you mean technically?”

“He means she’d have to be pretty ugly first,” Tony answers her making them fall into another round of giggles.

“I didn’t say that,” McGee defends himself when Kate glares at him.

“I swear I do not get paid enough for this,” Kate exclaims in anger.

“For what, Kate?” Gibbs demands of her while walking into the squad room.

“Nothing. We are just discussing potential suspects.”
“Focusing on the sergeant’s wife and best friend, boss,” Tony adds.

“Yes. Well, come on. We’ve got one more,” Gibbs informs us while walking through the squad room to the back elevator.

“You guys are four years old, honestly,” Kate hisses at Tony and McGee who are giggling like children again.

“No they are four and a half. Get it right,” I correct Kate while we follow Gibbs.

“Uh…nice hat,” Tony exclaims when we walk into the lab and see her wearing a disposable hat that she has drawn on and cut holes for her hair.

“Attention,” Kate exclaims with a smile at Kate.

“In a weird way,” McGee agrees making me take a step back from him in disgust.

“Why?” Gibbs and I ask her.

“Well, I had to set up a clean room in the ballistics lab to work on the damaged videotape. And just throwing the hats away seemed sort of wasteful. So I decided to recycle. What do you think?” Abby asks us happily.

“I think it suits you. Now what’s on the tape?” Gibbs answers her without answering her at the same time.

“Oh, I haven’t finished cleaning it up yet, but I have a P-O-I.”

“Person of interest,” Tony whispers to McGee.

“Let’s see it please,” I say to Abby while ignoring Tony.

“The following program has been edited for time and content. It may not be appropriate for younger views,” Abby ramble while pulling up the video that she has recovered already.

“Abby!” Gibbs cuts her off.

“Right,” Abby exclaims while playing the video.

“This isn’t a good idea, Bill,” Judy exclaims on the recording with music in the background.

“I’ve asked this guy three times to turn his music down,” Moore exclaims in anger.

“Yea, now we make him,” Caine exclaims.

“And if he has a gun or something in there?” Judy demands of the males.

“I film t and we get the redneck arrested.”

“Way to encourage him, Roger.”

“Oh, come on, honey. It’s not that big of a deal. We’ll be right back.”

“Okay, this next part is like an outtake from Deliverance,” Abby informs us when she purses the video for a second to inform us.

“I thought I told you guys to leave me the hell alone!” Runion, the drunk, yells out the two man on the video.

“Sir. We will once you turn the music down,” Moore inform the drunk while a dog barks in the background.

“What? Do you think I’m afraid of you or something?”

“I’m not here to fight you. We just want you to lower the music,” Moore begins but the drunk cuts him off by threatening them. There is a struggle that ends with Runion in a head lock. “Hey, hey, hey!”

“I’ll kill you! I’ll kill you!”

“No. what you just did, you just assaulted me on camera. Not wither you leave or we’re going to call the cops,” Moor explains while pointing at the camera in his friend hands.

“All right. Just let me go.”

“Huh!”

“All right.”

“We need to I.D. this guy,” Gibbs orders Abby once the video ends suddenly.

“Oh, I’m way ahead of you, Gibbs. I got a shot of the license plate. It is registered to a David Runion. His last address is an R.V. campground in Manassas. He’s since moved,” Abby reports to Gibbs happily.

“Find him. That’s good work, Abby. Tony, head back to Shenandoah State Park. Take McGee,”
Gibbs orders them.
“Thanks Abby,” I say to her.
“For what exactly, boss?” Tony asks him.
“I want to know where the Sergeant was killed before he was tossed off that cliff,” Gibbs explains to Tony before placing his hand on my back to leave the lab back to the squad room.

“I found David Runion, Gibbs. He checked into another campground twenty miles from the Shenandoah State Park. Also ran a background check on him. He’s served time,” Kate reports to Gibbs in the squad room after Tony and McGee left for the crime scene again.

“For what?” I ask her.

“Assault and battery. He nearly beat a man to death with a pool cue in ninety three.”

“Looks like this time he might have succeeded,” Gibbs and I comment together.

“We need a warrant?”

“We need evidence for a warrant, Kate. Right now I just want to talk to him,” Gibbs informs her.

“Is that a rat or a dog?” Kate asks when we see a little thing tied up outside the caravan. She goes over to pat it while saying, “Hey, buddy. Hey. Oh. Sorry,” Kate exclaims when the thing almost bites her hand off. Gibbs kneels down next to the thing making Kate exclaim, “I wouldn’t do that if I were you, Gibbs.” Gibbs lets the dog smell his hand and them pats it head and behind it’s ears, until the dog rolls over for him to pat her belly while licking Gibbs hand.

“One day you’re going to have to tell me how you do that,” Kate exclaims while walking around the dog in a wide circle.

“Easy. They can sense sarcasm,” Gibbs answers her sarcastically. We walk up to the camper and Gibbs calls out while I knock on the door, “Runion! Special Agents Gibbs and Todd, NCIS! I’d like to ask you a few questions!”

The door opens without anyone being there. Gibbs and Kate pull their guns out while Gibbs signals for me to stay behind him. Gibbs quickly but quietly clears the camper to find it empty while Kate guards the door.

“Clear. What do you think?” Gibbs asks us while looking around the mess.

“The word disgusting comes to mind,” Kate answers him.

“You smell that?” I ask them.

“Ah, if you’re referring to the urine, yes.”

“No, I mean this,” I correct her while lifting an ashtray with a bud in it.

“Marijuana?”

“Yeah, it’s recent too. Ah,” Gibbs comments while pulling out a big bag of marijuana.

“Well, it’s enough to bring him in and hold him for a while.”

“Oh, yeah,” Gibbs comments while the dog/rat/thing begins barking making us rush to the door.

“Runion! Federal agents! Stop!” Kate calls to Runion who has his arms full of wood but when he sees us he turns and runs while leaving the wood behind.

“Why do they always run?” I ask them while Kate and Gibbs take off after Runion but I just walk over to the dog/thing and pat it to quiet it down. “One day someone is not going to run,” I say to the dog while sitting down next to it.

After a while they return with Runion in handcuffs.

“How it go?” I ask them from my spot beside the dog/thing.

“Good,” Gibbs answers me.

“Good,” Gibbs answers me.

“How did you do that?” Kate asks me while patting at the dog I am patting that is sitting in my lap.

“I’m nice. Everything likes me,” I answer her while placing the dog on the ground and standing up.

“Let’s go,” Gibbs orders us while leading us to the car. I am attempting to dust my bottom off but I can’t see it, so I don’t know if there is still dirt on it. After placing the suspect in the car he walks over to me while smirking.

“What?”

“Having fun?”
“Totally.”
“Want some help?” Gibbs asks me with a smirk.
“DiNozzo, is that you?”
“Get in the front of the car,” Gibbs suddenly says while leading me to the passenger door making Kate have to sit in the back with the suspect.
“I know you can hear me out there. I’m telling you for the last time. I gotta use the bathroom. Okay, have it your way. It won’t be the first time I had to do this,” Runion yells from integration while Kate, Tony and I watch from observation.
“Maybe we should,” Kate states.
“He’s bluffing.” Tony states while eating a chip out of his pack.
“That’s nice, Kate,” Tony comments while putting his chips down.
“Thank you Kate,” I say innocently while picking up Tony’s chips and eating them making Kate glare at me.
“I’m more concerned about what Gibbs will do if this redneck takes one in our interrogation room,” Tony comments while giving me a look for eating after Kate’s description.
“I gotta use the bathroom,” Runion exclaims as Gibbs storms into the integration room.
“Hold it,” Gibbs orders him.
“I can’t.”
“Good, we can do this quickly. Why’d you murder Sergeant William Moore?”
“What? Who the hell is that?”
“That’s right. You probably don’t recall his name,” Gibbs comments before playing the video.
“I’m not here to fight you. We just want you to lower the music,” Moore begins but the drunk cuts him off by threatening them. There is a struggle that ends with Runion in a headlock. “Hey, hey, hey!”
“I’ll kill you! I’ll kill you!”
“No. what you just did, you just assaulted me…”
“He was found yesterday lying at the bottom of a cliff,” Gibbs informs Runion while pursing the video.
“I’m sure about what this is all about? You think I killed some jarhead? No way, man. Nice try,” Runion exclaims.
“Why’d you run?”
“Cause of the pot in my trailer. I got a medical condition.”
“What? Stupidity?”
“Oh, man. I was really drunk that night. I barely even remember the guy. I sure as hell didn’t kill him.”
“Where were you yesterday between five thirty and seven thirty a.m.?”
“Sleeping. Yeah, at the rest stop off Two Eleven. I didn’t even wake up until after ten o’clock.”
“Witnesses.”
“Oh, sure. I mean, there were lots of other cars and trucks when I pulled in.”
“I need names.”
“I don’t have any names.”
“There are two rest stops on that road, Tony,” Kate comments after looking it up on her PDA.
“Check if they have any video surveillance or attendants,” Tony orders her.
“On it.”
“Running it, boss,” I say to Gibbs over the intercom.
“So what happens now?” Runion asks Gibbs.
“You’ve got a violent past, your alibi’s weak. And I’ve got you on tape threatening the victim. You tell me, Runion?” Gibbs asks the idiot.

“It’s been this way my whole life. It’s always been like this. One freakin’ nightmare after another. But I swear to you, Agent Gibbs, I didn’t kill anybody.”

“We found you bat.”

“What bat?”

“These are good,” I comment while finishing Tony’s chips.

“And can you mark it ‘Special Agent Todd.’ Thanks, Sheriff Lester. Dinner? Aren’t you married? Well, it does to me,” Kate says into the phone, trying to get the surveillance video. She turns to Tony and me and whispers, “My mother wonders why I’m not married.”

“So does mine,” Tony comments while Kate hangs up the phone.

“Could you stop doing that?” Kate hisses at Tony who is trying to sneak around her like Gibbs.

“I’m practicing, Kate.”

“What? Annoying me?”

“No, the creepy way Gibbs used to sneak up on us.”

“What do you mean used to?” Kate asks while Gibbs steps behind Tony without him knowing. I wave at Gibbs while smirking at the fact Tony is going to get it.

“The old man’s been wearing Ben-Gay lately. I can smell him coming a mile away.”

“Is that a fact, DiNozzo?” Gibbs asks Tony making him jump into the air.

“Knee feeling better, boss?”

“Much.”

“Great.”

“What about Runion’s alibi?”

“I’ve got the local sheriff pulling the security tapes from the rest stops on Route Two-Eleven,” Kate reports.

“And she’s got a date with a married man,” I add making Kate glare at me.

“And we have a description of his pickup and trailer circulating with the state cops who worked the area that night,” Tony also adds.

“Do you think he did it, Gibbs?” Kate asks Gibbs as he walks over to his desk and kicks me out of the chair.

“Oh, yeah. And Tony is cleaning up,” Gibbs informs us while answering his phone, “Janitorial, don’t worry about interrogation. DiNozzo is gonna handle it,” Gibbs then turns to Tony and snaps, “You still here?”

“Are you serious...? You serious? Oh. In my defence, I did use the word creepy in the most… affectionate way. Right,” Tony exclaims.

“You might want to use gloves,” Kate offers Tony.

“Or a fire hose,” I add.

“Where’s McGee?” Gibbs demands.

“Hospital or dead.”

“Alice,” Kate hisses.

“What? Have you seen him? He looks like a dead body warmed over.”

“Still not nice.”

“Your not nice.”

“What do you mean? That makes no sense.”

“You make no sense.”

“Alice.”

“Kate.”

“Stop it, both of you. And get back to work,” Gibbs orders us.

“Sorry boss. We both mumble.

“Runion’s trailer pulled into the rest stop around one a.m. that morning, Gibbs. And with a little
image enhancement,” Kate reports while we watch the surveillance video.
“Runion. I can almost smell him from here,” Tony comments.
“That’s not Runion,” I state while stepping away from Tony and to the other side of Gibbs.
“How long did he stay?” Gibbs asks Kate while ignoring my movements.
“All night,” Kate answers.
“Distance from Shenandoah River State Park?” I ask Kate next.
“It’s about two miles,” Tony answers me.
“Well, I guess he was telling the truth. We’re going to have to find a new suspect.”
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone and listens for a moment. He turns to us and informs us,
“Maybe not. Come on.”
“Okay, what have you got for me, Abs?” Gibbs asks as we walk into the lab but we all stop when we see the monster that has become of McGee.
“It looks worse than it is,” McGee defends himself.
“I’m not so sure about that,” Kate comments.
“I am going to have nightmares for the rest of my life. This is worse than the time I walked on mum and dad doing it,” I comment making Kate give me a look.
“When did you walk in on them?”
“Christmas morning. Just before I moved in with you. I don’t sleep for a week.”
“I wouldn’t have either.”
“She means you look like the elephant man, Probie,” Tony explains while ignoring Kate and me for the moment.
“Tony,” Kate hisses at Tony in anger.
“IT’s true.”
“Can you still work, McGee?” Gibbs asks McGee.
“More importantly, are you contagious?” I ask him while hiding behind Gibbs.
“Yeah sure, boss,” McGee answers Gibbs.
“But is it contagious?”
“Okay, what have you got for me, Abby?” Gibbs asks Abby while walking around Tony.
“Um, I cleaned up more of the sergeant’s videotape,” Abby reports happily.
“I need to see the last thing he shot.”
“Ooh, unfortunately that’s the part that received the most damage from the impact. It was in contact from the heads and a lot of the data got…”
“When?” I ask her while cutting her rambling off.
“I sent it to the naval photo lab and hopefully I’m going to have it back by tomorrow.”
“Well what am I doing here, Abby?” Gibbs ask her.
“Because of this. This is from the beginning of the tape. It’s mostly them setting up campo and checking out the area. And then there… this.”
“It looks like the widow and the best friend don’t know they’re being videotaped,” Tony ask while we watch the wife and best friend talking in more than a friendly way.
“And on the next.”
“Honey, what’s wrong?” Moore as his wife on the tape but we don’t have good sound.
“Still think men and women can just be friends, Kate?” Tony asks Kate.
“I can’t be sure, Gibbs. According to Gloria, lip reading was never my strong suit,” Abby informs us while trying to read the lips on the video.
“Gloria her deaf sister?” Kate asks us.
“Mm-mm, mother,” Gibbs answers her while writing in his note book.
“I think Judy Moore is saying… we have to something… blank him,” Abby informs us.
“Kill?” Kate offers.
“No…”
“Murder?” Gibbs offers next.
“Nope.”
“Love,” Tony adds next.
“No,” Abby says while Gibbs hits Tony on the back of the head with his note book.
“I really wish you’d stop doing that.”
“I will, Tony, once you stop blanking up,” Gibbs informs her.
“Abby, could you pull the video back wider? You see how see’s touching his face? I mean, it’s very intimate. Clearly there’s more than a friendship going on here,” Kate says while pointing to the two people on the video. The wife is touching the best friend’s face in a sexual way.
“Which just goes to prove my point about the sexes, Kate,” Tony brags.
“DiNozzo, you pick up Sergeant Caine in the morning. Kate, you pick up Judy Moore, don’t tell her why,” Gibbs orders us.
“Looks like we’re going to play Gibb’s favourite game.”
“Musical Interrogation roos,” Abby exclaims happily.
“Isn’t that illegal?” I ask her.
“In a way. Water?” Gibbs informs her while offering her a bottle of water.
“Thank you.”
“So Mrs Moore, tell us about your husband? What kind of a man was he?” Kate as the widow.
“Loving, gentle.”
“What bout jealous?” I ask her.
“Where do you want him, boss?” Tony ask Gibbs while bring in Caine.
“Interrogation one,” Gibbs answers Tony.
“Roger?” Judy exclaims.
“Judy, what the hell did you tell them?” Caine hisses.
“No talking, marine!” Tony orders Caine while pulling on his arm.
“What is going on here?” Judy demands of us.
“That’s what you’re going to tell me, Mrs Moore. Take her to interrogation room two,” Gibbs orders before answering his phone, “Yeah Gibbs.”
“I’ll read you your rights on the way,” Kate say to Judy while leading her away.
“Did you get the last shot from my tape?” Gibbs ask Aby as we walk into the lab.
“I’m just working on it now, Gibbs. It’s kind of like a nature documentary but with a riveting murder mystery subplot. This is where it gets interesting,” Abby informs us while playing the video. We watch what looks like the victim falling to his death.
“He slipped and fell?” I ask her.
“In the original version. But this movie comes with an alienate ending. In slo-mo, right when the camera clams to the ground,” Abby says while doing it to show us someone on the video but we can’t see it.
“The killer recorded over it,” Gibbs comments.
“The impact caused the heads to lose contact with the tape, preserving two frames from the original recording. I’ve been working on cleaning them up.”
“Any way to recover the rest?” I ask her.
“Well, since all recordings leave a magnetic impression much like a computer hard drive, by the way, if I scan then data when I’ll be able to separate out…”
“When?” Gibbs cuts her off.
“You don’t have to take the fun out of everything, Gibbs. A few hours.”
“That’s a good job Abby. You have twenty minutes.”
“Gibbs!”
“Get McGee to help you!”
“Thank you, Abby,” I add while we leave the room.
“I know you,” Tony tells Kate as I walk into observation room with Gibbs walks into integration room.

“Is something wrong with your arm, Sergeant?” Gibbs ask Caine.

“I got some poison ivy in the field last week, sir,” Caine answers him.

“Is that a fact?”

“I didn’t murder anyone, sir.”

“Yeah, well we’ll get to that part. How long were you and Sergeant Moore friends?”

“Since boot camp, sir.”

“Perris Island or San Diego?”

“San Diego, sir.”

“Right. A Hollywood marine. So how long after that did you start screwing his wife?”

“I don’t understand, Agent Gibbs. Why am I in here?” Judy ask Gibbs as he walks into her integration room.

“Don’t you want to know who murdered your husband, Mrs Moore?”

“Yes, but I know it wasn’t Roger. He wouldn’t. There’s no way.”

“Why’s that?”

“Because… he was with me that morning.”

“By ‘with me’ you mean in the same sleeping bag?”

“She actually said that? No way, sir,” Caine exclaims.


“She’s insane. Look, right after Sergeant Moore went to film the sunrise, I went down to the campground showers. I was gone for about an hour.”

“So she was there when you got back?”

“Yes, sir. She was making breakfast.”

“So what you’re saying is she had about an hour to kill him.”

“I… I didn’t say that.”

“My mistake. You’re saying you had about an hour to kill him.”

“There’s no way Roger would say that,” Judy denies what Caine said about her being insane.


“I almost feel sorry for these two,” Kate comments while nodding at the tex guy to replace the other integration.

“Why would she lie?” Gibbs ask on the tape.

“She’s insane,” Caine answers on the tape.

“She what’s you’re saying is she had an hour to kill him?” Gibbs ask on the tape that we stop playing. Gibbs then ask the victim’s wife, “Let me guess. You thought he loved you.”

“When Bill was in Iraq, Roger and i…. we grew close,” Judy cries at Gibbs.

“What now, boss?” Tony ask Gibbs who just left the integration room.

“Put them both in the same room. I’m going to need a refill for this.”

“We fooled around a few times, Judy. It was a stupid mistake,” Caine hisses at Judy once we put them together.

“You said you loved me,” Judy exclaims.

“Are you nuts? Bill was my best friend. It should never have happened.”

“Then why did you kill him, if it wasn’t to be with me?”

“Stop saying that, you crazy!” Caine begins but then turns to the two way mirror and calls us out to us, “I didn’t kill him! She’s making it up!”

“I’m pregnant, Roger. It’s yours.”
“This is better than cable,” Tony comments.
“The question is, which one’s telling the truth?” Kate ask us but no one can answer her. Gibbs takes a sip of his coffee and continues to watch the drama unfolding in front of us.

His trailer never left the rest stop,” Tony exclaims in confusion when McGee informs us that Abby found that the killer was Runion.

“But Runion did. Abby inverted the image and at zero nine hundred you can just make out his shadow underneath the trailer as he’s coming back. It’s only a four mile round trip on foot,” McGee explains.

“Thanks, sheriff,” Kate says into the phone before hanging up and turning to Gibbs, “Runion posted bail for the pot charge an hour ago.”

“Let’s roll,” Gibbs orders while grabbing his gear.

“What about Sergeant Caine and Mrs Moore?” McGee ask Gibbs.

“Let them suffer for a while. I think Sergeant Moore would appreciate that.”

Gibbs drives us to Runion’s camper at high speeds like normal. We come to a screeching stop and climb out of the car with our guns raised at the camper.

“Put down your weapon, Runion! You’re not getting out of here alive!” Gibbs calls to Runion who is pointing a gun at us from his camper. But his answer is just to break the glass on his camper then shot out of the broken window making us all duck down behind the car.

“I ain’t going back to prison, Gibbs! You hear me?!” Runion call out to Gibbs.

“I’d say we’re outgunned, Boss,” Tony comments.

“I’ll circle around back,” Kate offers while getting ready to do just that.

“I’ve got a better idea,” Gibbs comments before whistling loudly making the dog bark.

“Hey!” Runion yells when his dog runs to us and jumps into the car.

“You might want to cover your ears,” Gibbs informs us before shotting the gas tank making the whole trailer go us. I duck down behind the door Gibbs and I are hiding behind while covering my ears from the sound.

“I think you got him, boss,” Tony comments while looking at the burning camper.

“Well, what are we going to do with this thing?” Kate Ask while looking at the dog Gibbs saved.

“I’ll keep him,” I comment while patting the dog happily.

“No way, Alice.”

“Please Kate, look at this cu… look at him.”

“I’ll take him. I always wanted a dog,” Tony offers when Kate just gives me a look that says, ‘no not happening.’

“Oh, good dog!” Kate exclaims when the dog almost bites Tony’s hand when he goes to pat him. She looks at me and says, “Fine, you can keep him. But you have to look after him yourself, feed him, water, walk, bath and clean up after him.”

“Why do you look like you don’t think I can do that?”

“You forget to eat yourself. I have to remind you to eat, and drink.”

“I look after myself just fine thank you.”

“What’s you gonna call him.”

“It’s a bitch, Kate,” Gibbs comments when Kate keeps calling her a him.

“But I already know an ugly Tony, why would I want to know two?”

“Fine. Ugly Tony the second.”

Is it just me or do you think Tony likes me?” Kate ask Abby while looking down at Tony the dog
as Tony the person hides behind the wall to listen in on our conversation.
“I think it’s more than obvious Tony likes you,” Abby answers with a grin.
“Not my usually type, but kind of cute.”
“More like adorable. Maybe we could share Tony?” Abby ask when Tony the dog begins barking at
Tony the person giving him away. “What’s wrong?”
“Oh, nothing. Good doggie. You can come out now, DiNozzo.”
“Yeah, I’ll just, uh… I’ll take care of that. Thank you,” Tony says into the phone he is ‘talking on’
before turning to Kate and saying, “Hey.”
“Did you bring the dog food,” I demand of Tony.
“Yeah, they didn’t have any bowls,” Tony informs me while handing me the bag of dog gear.
“That’s okay. I’ve got it covered,” I say while kneeling down and putting the wet dog food in
Tony’s hat that I have turned into a dog bowl behind Kate’s desk.
“Got a present for you, little Tony,” Abby say to my dog while putting a studded collar on her neck.
“Good idea. Now we can tell the two of them apart,” Kate comments making me laugh at that.
“At least I don’t hang out with married, Kate,” Tony says to her.
“Ah will you please tell him that men and women can just be friends?” Kate begs of Abby.
“Absolutely they can,” Abby agrees with her.
“Without having sex,” Tony adds.
“Oh, no. they’ll have sex.”
“Abby!” Kate hisses.
“What, Kate? You never slept with a friend?”
“What is wrong with you people?”
“Good question, Kate. What did you do to the dog?” Gibbs ask while walking over to his desk.
“Just taking care of her. Unless you want to.”
“Here you go, baby,” I say to the dog while lifting her down off Kate’s desk onto the ground where
the food is.
“Wow! She even eats like you, Tony,” Kate say to Tony teasingly.
“Did anybody see my ball cap?” Tony ask while ignoring Kate and searching his area.
“No,” Kate and Abby answer in unison.
“I could have sworn I left it right on my desk,” Tony complains while Gibbs looks to where I am
sitting behind Kate’s desk to see the missing hat with the dog eating out of it making him smile.

When Kate and I get home with Ugly Tony the second in tow. I head straight to the kitchen where I
grab a bowl and fill it with water for the dog, I place the water and a bowl of dogfood in the corner
where she can find it but it won’t be knocked over. Once I place that out I head into my bedroom
where I set up a doggy bed with a couple of toys for her and I set up an indoor puppy potty for the
dog to use at need.
“Hey, Ducky,” I say as I walk into autopsy to see him doing an autopsy on a poor victim.
“Hey, Alice. What’s up?” Ducky asks me.
“I’m avoiding Kate and Tony, they’re at it again. Is he really dead?”
“Yes. What is it this time?”
“Food. Tony ate Kate’s lunch. So, I’ve been thinking, since you’re my father, we need to get to know each other outside of work.”
“What are you thinking?”
“Dinner, every week so no matter what is happening we can talk.”
“That’s a good idea.”
“No need to sound so surprised. I have good ideas, I’m not Tony.”
“What day do you want to have the dinner?” Ducky asks me while I jump up onto the second autopsy bed.
“How’s Sunday’s?”
“Sounds good, as long as we’re not working.”
“Deal.”
“I didn’t think that you would notice,” Tony exclaims while walking into autopsy with Kate.
“Here we go again.”
“Oh, stealing food is okay if nobody notice,” Kate hisses at Tony while Ducky looks over at them before returning to the x-ray he is looking at for his victim.
“It’s not stealing, it’s sharing!” Tony responds to Kate.
“It was my lunch! I didn’t want to share my lunch with you.”
“You see? You just said it was sharing!”
“Excuse me. Show a little respect. This is a place of peace and dignity,” Ducky states to them while pointing to the body.
“That was before Kate got here.”
“We need a mediator, Ducky, or I’m going to have to go to Employee Relations,” Kate begs Ducky.
“Which would be tattling.”
“No, going to Employee Relations is not tattling.”
“It’s the adult version of ‘I’m telling mummy.’”
“You’re so juvenile.”
“Am not.”
“Are so.”
“Am not.”
“Ducky, we need an unofficial mediator.”
“Did you try Gibbs?” Ducky asks but everyone including him pulled a bad idea face.
“Ooh.”
“Oh yes, I see your point.”
“We thought of McGee.”
“But we have no respect for him,” Tony adds.
“And then we thought of you.”
“I see… third on the short list. Well, at least I beat out Abby,” Ducky says slightly sadly.
“Well, we just came from there,” Tony informs him.
“She turned us down,” Kate adds.
“What about me, how is poison-ivy before me?” I demand of them.
“Oh,” Ducky says at the same time.
“Come on, Ducky! She’s driving me crazy!” Tony begs of Ducky.
“I am busy, but uh…”
“Abby need these blood samples stat,” Jimmy says while leaving with the blood.
“Yes, as I say I am busy. But I’m flattered that you would entrust your relationship to me. It will be rather like… marriage counselling.”

“Oh, well let’s not use those words,” Tony says to Ducky.

“Ducky, it is only a working relationship,” Kate adds.

“It’s not even that. The problem is it is not working,” I state making them glare at me.

“So you’ll do it?” Tony begs of Ducky.

“Of course. I would relish the experience. Yes I studied psychology at the University of Edinburgh under Professor O’Donnell,” Ducky rambles.

“Oh, so let’s start. I left my desk for just a minute, and when I came back, Tony was eating half of my tuna fish sandwich,” Kate begins with the hope that Ducky while agree with her.

“Oh, see? See? I’m hungry! We’re buddies! It shouldn’t be a big deal. It’s not a big deal. But little miss tight and twisty pants blows everything out of proportion and it becomes a major deal,” Tony defends himself.

“All you left me was the crust!”

“Well, who is right here?”

“Come on, Ducky, please! Tell him!”

“We need to look a little deeper. I mean, there is clearly a latent sibling rivalry being expresses by your adolescent and sexually-charged bickering. It all stems from a desperate desire to please a father figure. And I think we all know who that is,” Ducky explains without taking a side.

“What does this have to do with my tuna fish sandwich?” Kate asks in confusion.

“There’s no father-figure, Ducky,” Tony exclaims as the door opens and Gibbs storms into autopsy.

“Hey! Why don’t you answer your phone? Norfolk Homicide found a body, a female Petty Officer. Come on, let’s go!” Gibbs snaps at us.

“I’ll gas the truck,” Tony exclaims as we all leave autopsy into the elevator.

“I’ve got the gear,” Kate adds.

“I prepacked the gear already.”

“Petty Officer Second Class Amanda King, according to her id. Twenty six years of age in the navy four years. That’s as far as I got when we called you. We’ve got enough things to do around here. Give me a break. I’m trying to quite,” The local cop, Mauceri, reports before taking a drag of his smoke as we all stand in an apartment bedroom where the young lady died.

“Is this the suspect?” Gibbs asks him while pointing to a young man.

“Willie Taylor. Tends bar at sugar street. We’re processing him now.”

“Okay, Duck.”

“Ooh,” Ducky says while looking the poor body over.

“Stabbed to death?” I ask while looking at the poor girl, because that is all she is.

“Oh, I think that’s a safe assumption. Well, I found something round her nares. Show them, Jimmy.”

“Do I have nares, Jimmy?” Gibbs tests Jimmy.

“All mammals have nares, sir. Opening in your nose,” Jimmy answers.

“Give that to Abby. Have her id it.”

“Yes, sir. I didn’t mean to imply that you didn’t know what nares were…”

“I knew that,” Gibbs snaps at Jimmy while cutting him off.

“Yeah, well, the windows are open, the body is naked. Which would allow the heat to dissipate faster. If I were forced to proclaim a,” Ducky rambles.

“He’s forcing,” I cut Ducky off while pointing to Gibbs.

“Ah… oh three thirty. Oh five hundred.”

“We had an anonymous nine-one-one call of a women screaming in this apartment at five thirty,” Mauceri exclaims while reporting to us.

“Or zero five thirty.”

“McGee, see if you can trace the source of the nine-one-one call,” Gibbs orders him.

“On it,” On says while getting to it.

“Her lividity has changed. She may have been moved,” Jimmy informs Ducky but we all hear him.
“The suspect said he flipped her,” Mauceri informs us.
“Boss, I don’t know if you want to see this, but you probably should. Some night. There’s got to be three condoms in there,” Tony informs us while showing us the bin with condoms in it.
“Bag ’em. Get them to Aby,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“Spoke to Manda King’s CO,” Kate says while walking into the crime scene.
“Bag ’em, probie,” Tony orders McGee while handing him the bin with the condoms.
“Said she was a good sailor, straight-laced, a real hard worker. And she was being promoted to the Captain’s Yeoman.”
“Personal yeoman to a Navy captain doesn’t track with snorting drugs,” Gibbs says while looking around the crime scene where there is drugs and sex all around.
“No, she told her shipmates that she had business in Norfolk.”
“Didn’t say what?” I ask Kate.
“No.”
“Your place or mine?” Gibbs asks Mauceri.
“Mine,” Mauceri answers him without hesitation.

“Look, on my mother’s life, that’s not the girl that I took home last night,” Willie informs Gibbs in integration.
“You went to bed with one women and you woke up with another?” Gibbs asks her in disbelief.
“Mm-hmm.”
“I hate when that happens. Never is pretty. Sorry. Oh, come on. You’re not going to tell Ducky about that, are you?” Tony begs Kate when he sees her taking notes on what he says throughout the day.
“Yes, I am. I’m keeping a journal,” Kate informs him.
“Tony, are you sure it’s not the same girl, but without her makeup and school uniform?” I ask Tony with a straight face.
“I suppose that knife wasn’t your knife?” Gibbs asks the suspect while showing him a photo of the knife we found.
“No, it wasn’t. I actually carry a Swiss army knife,” Willie answers Gibbs.
“How many drinks did you have?”
“Ok like two or three.”
“Your blood alcohol level was point one two percent, Willie,” Mauceri informs him.
“All right, look. You got me. I had a few more. You know how it is when you’re tending bar.”
“No, tell me.”
“You act friendly, and people buy you drinks.”
“Which are watered down to make more money?” Gibbs asks him.
“No, we don’t do that at Sugar Street, all right?”
“You pick her up at the club?” Mauceri questions him.
“No, no, I met her in the parking lot. She said she lost her keys.”
“You ever see her before?” Gibbs asks him.
“Nope. I just thought… ‘Damn. You… you’re a lucky bastard.’ You know what I mean?”
“Did you get her name, lucky bastard?”
“Manda… I think.”
“Ah.. Funny,” Mauceri begins.
“The dead sailor we found in your bed was named Manda,” Gibbs finished.
“She’s not the girl that I slept with,” Willie yells.
“What was Manda’s last name?”
“She didn’t say.”
“Phone number?”
“I didn’t get it. Look, it all went down kind of fast, all right? I gave her a kiss, whoopdy whoop, then it’s back to my place to make some noise.”
“Anybody see you two who can verify your story?”
“No.”
“You and Manda get in a fight?” Mauceri asks him.
“No, look, we had a good time, all right?”
“Oh yeah. I’d say you had a real good time. We found traces of meth in your blood.”
“Did you give her meth, too?” Gibbs integrates him.
“No, we didn’t do any drugs together,” Willie exclaims before yelling at the officer and agent who is leaving the room, “I am telling the truth. That is not the girl I slept with.”

Abs, I need the condoms tested,” Gibbs informs Abby as we walk into the lab.
“Not the words you want to hear first think in the morning. It’s already running,” Abby says to us with a smile.

“Not just the inside. We want to make sure the outside DNA is tested and matches our victim,” I inform her.

“The suspect claims he went to bed with one woman and woke up with another,” Tony enlightens Abby.

“That happens to girls, too. At night some guy seems all dark and snarly. And you wake up and his tattoos are fake and he works at a bank,” Abby informs us.
“I used to work at a bank,” McGee exclaims in a defensive tone of voice.
“Your tat is real and you don’t disappoint me.”
“Really. I always thought you two broke up because he disappointed you,” I exclaim making Abby smile at me but didn’t say anything about it.
“Boss, the anonymous phone call come from a payphone outside Willie’s apartment,” McGee reports to Gibbs.
“No fingerprints?” Gibbs asks in surprise.
“No. and that’s weird. He sleeps with her, he stabs her, and there’s no prints on the knife,” Abby adds.

“Blood matches the victim?” I ask her.
“Yeah. The tox screen is still running, but it’s a safe bet that it’s methamphetamines.”
“Powder in her nose was meth?” Gibbs asks her next.
“Yup.”

“Why would a straight-laced Petty Officer OD on meth?” Kate asks in surprise.
“Maybe she’s not so straight-laced? We all have our funky side. Except Kate. Ooh! And you, boss. I’m sure you have no funky side,” Tony says digging a hole to be buried in.
“What about me?” I ask him.
“You, have a funky side. A big one.”
“Only way to live. No point living just to the rules.”
“Time to find out who the real Manda King was,” Gibbs states while leaving the lab with us in tow.

“I never thought Manda would go before me,” Ben King, the victim’s father, says to us from his hospital bed.

Dad’s got end-stage bone cancer,” Samantha, the victim’s sister, informs us.
“Did your sister know a Willie Taylor?” Gibbs asks the family members.
“Not that I know. But then she’s been at sea for eight months.”
“He’s not a sailor,” I inform her.

“Is that who stabbed my little girl?” Ben almost cries.
“No, he’s a suspect, sir,” Gibbs politely informs the mourning, dying father.
“You’ll burn him, won’t you, agent Gibbs?!!”
“If he did it, you have my word.”

“Mister King, can you tell us a bit about your daughter, sir?” Kate asks the father.
“Manda was tough as nails. Worked hard. Cared for me. Helped me to raise her. She would do anything for you,” Ben answers Kate but ends up talking to his youngest daughter.

“Did you know Manda was promoted to Captain’s Yeoman?” Samantha asks her father in the hopes
of cheering him up.

“Yes, she was a fine sailor. Which makes what I’m about to tell you is difficult to hear,” Gibbs tells the family.

“My daughter’s dead. What’s worse than that?” Ben demands of us.

“We found drug residue in her nose.”

“That’s a lie! Manda never did drugs in her life!” Samantha yells at us.

“I’m sorry, but that is what we found,” Kate informs her.

“I don’t believe. Won’t believe it!” Ben exclaims.

“You have to come in here and tell this to my father?!” Samantha demands of us.

“Your sister was murdered. We have to know who she really was,” I explain to them softly in the hopes of calming them down.

“She… was my good girl. That’s who… who she was. Daddy’s girl… good girl,” Ben mumbles breathlessly while crying making us leave his hospital room.

“I feel bad for them. First they find out their sister and daughter dies. Next they hear she was doing drugs,” I mumble as we walk.

“We’ll work it out,” Gibbs informs me.

“Hey, DNA tests done already?” Gibbs ask as we walk into the lab where Abby is.

“No, it’s running, but I got an answer without it. The fluid on the outside of the condoms has a different blood antigen than Petty Officer Amanda Kind’s. There’s no way Petty Officer King has sex with Willie Taylor,” Abby happily reports.

“Willie was set up,” I comment.

“The knife missed her vital organs, so the wounds in and of itself was not fatal,” Ducky informs us when we walk into autopsy for the report.

“She didn’t bleed to death?” Gibbs ask him in surprise.

“Exactly. Her body contained four litters of blood so there was no exsanguination.”

“Ducky,” I cut him off.

“I’m sorry. It’s such a lovely word, exsanguination. I can’t help saying it. Moving on, since there was bleeding from the wound.”

“She was dead when she was stabbed,” Gibbs and I summarise.

“Precisely. Abby confirmed the… the drug in her nose and blood was methamphetamine, an incredibly large lethal dose of methamphetamine.”

“Someone tried to make an accidental overdose look like murder,” Gibbs comments.

“Oh I wouldn’t call it an accidental overdose. No in cases like this where such a frightening high amount of the drug is found, I would say it was a suicide.”

“Boss, Willie Taylor’s here,” Tony reports while walking into autopsy.

“Do you know why Norfolk PD delivered you here?” Gibbs ask Willie as we walk into integration where he is.

“Yeah. I’m a ping-pong ball. They serve me to you and you smack me right back,” Willie answers Gibbs.

“No… no, you are telling the truth. Petty officer King OD’d. After she was dead someone stabbed her… put her in your bed, made it look like murder. Who would do that to you?” I demand of him.

“Wait a second. So you know that I’m completely innocent? Man, don’t I get like an apology or nothin’?”

“You get to slide on using methamphetamines,” Gibbs informs her.

“I don’t know.”

“That’s not good enough,” I comment while leaving the integration behind Gibbs.

“Wait, wait, wait! Wait!” Willie calls to us and once we have returned to our chair he continues, “Look, female sailors are like poison. If anything happens to them, drugs, sex, anything – it doesn’t matter – you guys put our club off limits. All right? No sailors, you ain’t got no Sugar.
“Who’s benefit from that?” Gibbs ask him.
“Uh… yeah, well Ian Hitch. He owns Teaz and we’re his only real competition. If that sailor OD’d in his club, he would need to get the stink off fest.”
“And shut Sugar down in the process,” I finish for him.
“That’s the kind of stunt that limey bastard would pull, too.”

“Ian Hitch. AKA Bulldog. American mother, English father. Dual citizenship. According to Scotland Yard, he was charged with murder twice in Manchester, skated both times,” McGee reports later that day back in the squad room.
“I’m afraid to ask, why Bulldog?” Kate ask.
“I don’t know.”
“Bulldog bites you on the ass and never let’s go,” Tony informs us.
“Oh, he owns Teaz in Norfolk. Yeah, when I was stationed there, I heard about it. Apparently there are some very hot dancers there.”
“You heard?” I ask him in disbelieve.
“Yeah, well I never went there. Honest.”
“Duck, her it seems to me that,” Tony begins but stops when he sees the look Kate is giving him, just waiting for something to tell Ducky about, “Why are you looking at le like that for?”
“Oh, I’m just waiting for you to say, ‘boss, let me take the lead on this one,’” Kate answers him.
“What I was going to say, Kate, was that if Hitch used a girl to seduce Willie Taylor, it was probably one of his dancers. We got Willie to identify Ms Go-Go and flip her to get to Hitch.”
“What are you doing?”
“I’m just chronicling this little conversation for our next session with Ducky.”
“Are you done?” I ask them.
“Almost.”
“Done or fired are the choices,” Gibbs informs Tony.
“Done.”
“Shall we take Willie to the club to identify the girl?” Kate ask Gibbs.
“No. I don’t want him anywhere near Hitch,” Gibbs answers her.
“Boss, I will find out who dances at the club and pull their DMV photos,” McGee offers.
“Not going to work, Probie. The girls at the clubs work for tips, Probie. No W-two forms. And names like Tiffany Glitter and Stormy Weathers, they don’t appear on drivers’ licenses. Boss, I really think I should take,” Tony begins but looks at Kate when he release what he is saying, “the lead on this case.” After he finishes talking Kate, Gibbs and I begin chuckling at him without Gibbs answering Tony.

“All right, it’s looking good,” Abby comments from our spot in MTAC while Tony and Kate are looking around the nightclub with a camera in each of their fake, glasses.
“Let’s see, Tony! Well, what do you know? DiNozzo is finally looking where he is supposed to be looking,” Gibbs comments when Tony begins looking at one of the dancers asses.
“Mostly,” I remind Gibbs while staring at the screen with Tony camera.
“I heard that. How’s that?” Tony exclaims before looking at the dancers face next.
“Well, it’s art, but we kind of need a shot of her face. I can make a fortune on the internet with this. Okay, got it,” Abby rambles while taking a screen shot of the dancers face to run.
“Next,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“Right, boss. Just being thorough,” Tony says while looking to the next danker.
“That’s it. I’m watching you, DiNozzo,” Gibbs warns Tony.
“How’s that look?” Kate ask while looking at another dancers face.
“Uh… closer,” Abby ask her nicely.
“Is this better?”
“One second… ”
“Did you get it yet?” Kate asks before making the dancer look at her with a semi-smile thing.

“Wow, Kate. How’d you get her to do that?” Abby asks while Kate looks at the girls’ ass for a moment.

“DiNozzo, go back to the last booth! Yeah, right there,” I order Tony making me return to a man in the booth Tony is now looking at.

“Is that Hitch?” Tony asks us in surprise.

“That’s him,” McGee agrees.

“What’s up party people? Tonight’s going to be hot, but this crowd is even hotter because only the best get into Teaz. I’m DJ night trap and I’m going to get off the mic right now because I know you came here to see… Jade!” the DJ calls out the singer who is coming onto the stage.

“That’s Samantha King,” Kate exclaims in surprise when the sister of the victim comes out.

“Sophisticated lady… but nasty when I wanna be. I see you starin’ from across the room. And you can’t keep your eyes off me,” Samantha sings on stage while dancing.

“Hey Tony, stop jumping up and down. We can’t see!” Gibbs snaps at Tony who is bouncing, making us unable to see the sister.

“She’s got a good voice,” I comment while Tony and Kate wait to talk to the sister after she finished for the night.

“Talk to her,” Gibbs orders the two in the field before leading me out of the room into the squad room. I grab my coat and gear to leave for the night. Gibbs also gets his gear and we leave together, I climb up into Gibbs’ car. By the time Gibbs is on the road, I have already fallen asleep against the window of his car meaning when he takes the corner I fall against his shoulder.

Once we get to Gibbs’ house, he lifts me out of the car and up to the master bed room. He gently places me down on the bed and remove my shoes and coat so I can sleep easier.

After laying me in the bed and tucking me in, he goes down to the basement to work on his boat for a couple of hours or until he falls asleep.

“She’s cute. Yeah, she’s hot. I don’t know about you but I sleep with a lot of women, so,” Willie says while getting up after looking at the pictures again.

“I wouldn’t know anything about that, Willie. I’m a Mormon,” Tony says making Gibbs am me roll our eyes at his blatant lie.

“Sit down. You’re going to have to do better,” Gibbs orders Willie when he stands up from the chair.

“Look man, I’m doing the best I can, all right? All right… yeah, I think it’s her,” Willie begins but Gibbs gives him his ‘do better’ look making his finally identify one of the dancers.


“You think this is her?” I ask Willie.

“Look, there’s always something about every woman that you remember. Something small and subtle. Something you’re going to remember twenty years later; a piece of jewellery, a laugh, something. A smell,” Tony tries to get Willie to remember something.

“Oh! I feel like I died and woke up in a Calvin Klien ad,” Kate complains while cutting Tony off.


“Ah… ah, yeah. She had a tat. How could I forget?”

“What did it look like?”

“It was of a bulldog. It was… it was right there on her ass.”

“Sweet slick Willie, look at that. The devil is in the details. I remember this girl once. She squeaked.
She made this little,” Tony begins then squeaks.  
“Tony, do you want to tell Ducky that story?” Kate hisses at Tony in disgust.  
“Ducky’s already heard it. We all have,” Gibbs informs Kate.  
“It’s a good story!” Tony defends his story.  
“Then you tell it to Kate while you’re bringing in Summer Diamond.”  
“Wait, don’t I get to hear it?” Willie complains when Tony and Kate leaves.

“DO you recognize this man?” Gibbs ask Summer when he shows her a photo of Willie in integration.  
“Nope,” Summer answers after looking at the photo for but a second.  
“He works at Sugar Street. Ever been there?” I ask him. 
“I work six nights a week at Teaz. Last place I’m going to go on my night off is another club.”  
“You recognize this? Agent Todd took that photo. It is of your rear end,” Gibbs informs her while showing her the photo.  
“Willie described it perfectly,” I comment. 
“I dance practically naked. Hundreds of guys have seen my ass,” Summer comments.  
“So you didn’t sleep with him two nights ago?” Gibbs demands of her.  
“No.”  
“Willie says he’s never been to your club. You know what? We believe him,” I comments. 
“Every dancer in the club has that tat. It means we’re in Bulldog’s crew.” 
“I’d have thought he’d use a bite mark,” Gibbs comments to me. There is a knock at the door making Gibbs call out, “Enter! We have a court order for a DNA sample, Ms Diamond.”

“Open your mouth. It doesn’t hurt,” Abby say to Summer while swabbing the inside of her cheek. Once Abby has the swab we all leave the room into the corridor.  
“Compare it to the DNA found on the condoms in Willie Taylor’s apartment,” Gibbs orders of Abby.  
“That’s something I bet you never wanted to hear,” I comment to Abby making her grin get bigger. 
“Jethro! Jethro! I need you. I need you like now!” Ducky calls to Ducky while walking up to us.  
“Are you gay? And dating Ducky?” I ask Gibbs making him give me a look but I ignoring him, making him smack me on the ass because I am misbehaving.

“I’m sorry, Jethro. Because of the chemical burns from the methamphetamines and the bleeding, I… I missed this. There. There! Do you see it?” Ducky ask us while showing us a look up the victim’s nose where there is a perfect circle while we stand around the autopsy table.  
“Almost a perfect circle,” Gibbs comments. 
“I know I said that the cause of a massive overdose was usually suicide, but then I got to thinking.”  
“Always a good thing. I think sometimes, but it hurts my head,” I comment. 
“I mean, that mark was made by the end of a hard round cube… like the end of a funnel.” 
“You don’t commit suicide by pouring meth through a funnel into your nose,” Gibbs states.  
“No. it was a horrible, painful death.”

“You should have had backup yesterday, Kate,” Gibbs lecture after she has a little talk with the victim sister and them gets threatened by Bulldog the following day.  
“Well, I didn’t expect Hitch to show up, Gibbs. It won’t happen again,” Kate defends herself.  
“No one ever does. This is Ari all over again. You went on your own and got kidnapped, this time you almost got killed” I yell at her in fear for her safety because she obviously doesn’t.  
“I know. McGee, how’d he track her?” Gibbs turns to McGee.  
“Well, Samantha’s cell phone number is registered to Ian Hitch. So he’s probably using the imbedded GPS to keep tabs on her location,” McGee reports to Gibbs.  
“Paranoid,” I comment. 
“Kind of reminds me of someone. What I meant was most managers are afraid of losing their stares. With a voice like that, Samantha could be the next Brandy,” Tony reports to Gibbs.
“What’s a Brandy?” Gibbs questions us.

“Uh... She’s a singer and an actress, Boss,” McGee enlightens Gibbs.

“She’s very, very hot,” Tony adds.

“Look, the point is Hitch isn’t going to let her go. He’d kill her first,” Kate snaps making us get back on topic.

“Yeah, Gibbs. We on our way,” Gibbs answers his phone. He turns to Kate and me and informs us, “Norfolk homicide found the body of a young women. She had my card in her bra.”

“Keisha Scott. Looks like a hit-an-run, Gibbs,” Mauceri informs us when we arrive at the second crime scene where someone ran over Summer, the girl we had in integration just yesterday.

“Her club name is Summer Diamond. She was in our interrogation room yesterday,” Gibbs reports to the detective.

“Willie Taylor I.D.ed her as the girl he had sex with, not Petty Officer King,” Kate adds.

“She cop to it?” Mauceri questions us.

“If she did, she’d be in NCIS custody instead of dead,” Gibbs states.

“No chance this was an accident.”

“Nope.”

“Ian Hitch is involved,” Kate comments.

“Bulldog? That explains a lot. No witnesses, nobody in the neighbourhood heard anything last night. He’s got this part of town in his pocket,” Mauceri informs us.

“Yeah, how about you?” I ask him.

“I’ll pretend I didn’t hear that, Alice.”

“Yeah and am I to pretend that you answered it?”

“Alice,” Gibbs hisses at me to stop before adding, “Either way, I’m taking him down.”

“You might dins who did this, but connecting him to Bulldog? Uh-uh, ain’t gonna happen,” Mauceri informs us.

“Well, no, not if you keep letting him skate, Mauceri.”

“Hey, I’ve been down this road before, Gibbs. I bring him in for questioning, his lawyer will have him out before lunch.

“I’ve got a better idea.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah. You turn jurisdiction over on this to us this time,” I inform him.

“You got it. How soon can you get the rest of your team here?”

“Oh... pretty soon,” Gibbs informs the detective before whistling really loud making the van come around the corn and stop at the yellow tape.

“No way this was hit-and-run, boss. She’s practically naked. It was thirty-five degrees this morning,” Tony comments after we all begin working the crime scene.

“Do you see that, mister Palmer? Someone was holding her arms tightly before death, enough to cause these bruises,” Ducky informs Jimmy while pointing to bruises on the victim’s arms.

“She was shoved in front of a vehicle, Ducky?” I ask him while looking at our poor victim.

“It’s possible. We’ll know more when I get the poor girl back home.”

“We’ve got some broken glass over here. Looking at the thickness, may be a headlight,” Kate informs us while photographing it.

“Bag it. McGee!” Gibbs orders Kate before turning to McGee.

“Yeah, Boss?” McGee ask Gibbs.

“Locals think it was a hit and run. What about you?”

“Me? Um... me? Uh...”

“Answer the man, probie!” Tony orders McGee.

“He can’t, he swallowed his tongue,” I inform Tony.

“I don’t think so,” McGee finally spits out.

“Well, there are no skid marks before or after the body. Whoever hit her didn’t even slow down.”
“Kate, take DiNozzo and pick up Samantha. Make sure her cell phone is off. Don’t tell her about Summer.”

“I want to know where this dirt bag was the night Petty Officer King was murdered, and where he was last night when Summer decided to go for a walk half-naked,” Gibbs demands while we look at the photo of Hitch on the plasma screen.
“You got it, Boss,” McGee agrees while Samantha, Kate and Tony walk into the squad room. “It’s supposed to be my day off. How do you know Hitch won’t find out I’m not at the hospital with my father?” Samantha demands of Kate.
“He won’t,” Kate promises him.
“When our computer geek’s done with your phone, it’ll show you were there all day. Probie, rig the GPS chip location: Norfolk Hospital, room two seventeen thirty,” Tony orders McGee.
“You can really do that?” Samantha asks McGee in surprise.
“Sure,” McGee agrees without a care in the world. “I’ve already told your people I’m not talking about this, Agent Gibbs. So can we please make this quick?”
“You’re not here to talk,” Gibbs begins. “You’re here to see,” I finishes for Gibbs.
“What?” Samantha demands of us.
“A friend,” Gibbs and I inform her.

“Oh, God, Summer. Summer, this is not happening. How did this,” Samantha exclaims in surprise while looking at Summer’s body in autopsy.
“How do you think?” I demand of her when she stops in the middle of her question.
“She has a two year old. Even Bulldog…"
"Bulldog’s tying up some loose ends, Samantha,” Tony informs her.
“All you have to do is cooperate with us and we’ll take him out of your life for good,” Kate offers to her.
“I can’t. Don’t you understand?” Samantha hisses at us.
“Your sister is in the freezer. Maybe you’d like say goodbye,” Gibbs offers while placing his hand on the door with his sister.
“Summer talked to you! That’s why she’s lying on that slab! It’s not happening to me!”
“You’re right. It’s happening because of you@” I yell out Samantha.
“Oh, either charge me with something or I’m out of her. Now!” Samantha yells while leaving autopsy while we all follow her back into the elevator and into the squad room. Tony is trying to get her to stay but she is not listening.
“You’re making a big mistake, Samantha,” Tony calls to her.
“Once you walk out those doors, we can’t protect you,” Kate adds while Samantha grabs her stuff to leave.
“Boss, Hitch’s got a very good alibi for last night, he was in New York promoting his club. The photos here are from the gossip page of the Eastsider this morning. I checked with the airlines. He didn’t get back until eleven hundred today,” McGee reports.
“He always wins. I tried to tell my sister that. She didn’t listen. I hope you do before I end up dead, too,” Samantha complains before leaving.

“Cause of death?” Gibbs asks Ducky as we return to autopsy where Ducky has finished autopsying the latest victim.
“Well, she received severed fatal injuries consistent with vehicular homicide, and if I had to pick one… internal bleeding. Although her neck was broken on impact, damaging her spinal cord and a carotid artery. I’m afraid even if you’d survived, my dear, you would never have danced again,” Ducky answers before talking to the victim like normal.
“Drugs?” I ask him nest while looking at the young lady who lost her life for nothing.
“Well, the tox screen showed a mixture of methamphetamine and alcohol in her blood. Not enough
to kill her like out petty officer.”
“What about the bruising?” Gibbs ask Ducky next.
“Well, these bruises here on her arms were made by somebody holding her tightly. I wish I could tell
you more.”
“Yeah, Duck. So do I.”
“Jethro, there is a procedure Abby could use to life the fingerprints off these bruises.”
“Off of dead skin?” I ask him in surprise.
“Yeah. Only we’d need your approval.”
“Well, it’s prohibitively expensive and rarely works.”
“So is getting married. Do it!” Gibbs orders before leading me out of autopsy like normal with his
hand on my back.
“Why do you see everything, is like being married?” I ask Gibbs while stepping into the elevator.
“Because most things are.”
“Just because it is, doesn’t mean you have to point it out.”
“True,” Gibbs agrees with me with a small laugh as we leave the elevator into the squad room where
Tony is hovering over McGee.
“Okay, what do you have for me?” Gibbs demands of them while storming into the squad room.
“A way to keep tabs on Samantha King’s location, boss,” McGee says while Gibbs takes the last of
the cookies that Kate baked last night. “Uh… I think that one was for… when i… when I rigged the
GPS chip in her phone, I also downloaded the code. So now we can follow her anywhere she goes.”
“She’s twenty miles outside of Norfolk on Route Sixty-four,” Tony reports while looking at the
plasma screen where the tracking map is.
“Good work,” Gibbs begins making Tony look proud before he adds, “McGee. That’s a good job.”
Gibbs hands McGee the last cookie.
“Thank you, boss. But actually it was Tony’s idea,” McGee admits to Gibbs making him talk the
cookie back.
“I’m impressed, DiNozzo.”
“Just trying to help out, Boss,” Tony informs Gibbs while holding her hand out to get the last cookie
but Gibbs takes a bite of it. Making Tony exclaim, “That’s not right.”
“McGee, Abby’s need help. Tony, Kate, Alice, you’re with me.”
“Where are we going?” Kate asks him.
“Norfolk. We’re going to pay Ian Hitch a visit.”
“What about blowing our covers as talent scouts?”
“Well, you don’t know what talent is, if it punched you in the face. On a unrelated note, can I punch
Kate, Gibbs,” I say making Kate glare at me.
“Samantha is leaving with us,” Gibbs informs them while signing to me, “Not this time.”
“She changed her mind, Boss?” Tony asks us in surprise.
“It does not matter,” Gibbs begins.
“We’re not letting her end up like her sister and friend downstairs,” I finish for Gibbs.
“I’m tracking her GPS signal, Gibbs. Samantha’s back at the club,” Kate informs Gibbs who is
driving the car with Kate in the passenger seat, I am in the back with a sleeping Tony.
“DiNozzo,” Gibbs calls back to us but Tony just snores in answer.
“I’ll wake him up,” Kate offers while loosening her seatbelt to lean back to us while I just move
away from Tony.
“No. no. I’ve got a better idea. Hold on,” Gibbs informs us making Kate brace herself on the handle
next to the windscreen. I place my hands on the back of Gibbs chair moments before Gibbs slams on
the breaks making the come to a screeching stop and jerking Tony out of his seat, scaring him
awake.
“Bad dream, Tony?” Kate asks through her laughter.
“I thought I… I thought,” Tony begins but he can’t finish what he thought.
“Nothing. You need something in your head to think with,” I inform Tony through my laughter.
“Call Abby, see if she got any prints off the body,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“Sure, boss,” Tony says while ringing Abby in the lab back at NCIS. He speaks into his phone so we only get one side of the conversation, “All right, I got it. Thanks, Abby,” he then hangs up the phone and tells us, “They got a print off Summer’s body. It’s the bouncer from outside the club the other night.” Gibbs begins drive erratically making the tires screech while getting traction on the road.

“She’s inside,” Kate comments when we arrive at the strip club.
We are walking towards the building when we hear gunfire and a woman runs out screaming in fear.
We run towards the door of the office and Gibbs kicks it open.
“Put the weapon down!” Gibbs orders the man with a gun in his hand pointed at Hitch’s body.
“He was going to kill her. I didn’t have a choice,” McGinty, the man and bodyguard, defends himself.
“Drop it!”

“Do you have everything ready for shipment to Norfolk?” Gibbs demands of McGee and Abby as we walk into the lab.
“It might be a problem, though, Gibbs,” Abby suddenly exclaims.
“What kind of problem?” I ask her.
“I got back Summer Diamond’s DNA, and it does not match the DNA we took off the condoms at that first crime scene.”
“She didn’t set Willie Taylor up?” Gibbs asks her in surprise.
“Nope,” McGee answers her.
“The weird thing is I did get a near match from the Armed Forces DNA Registry,” Abby informs us.
“He was set up by a sailor?” Gibbs states while handing Abby her caf-pow he was carrying for her.
“I’m going to make you pound Daddy, just like you were of Manda. Everybody’s going to know my name,” Samantha tells her father as we walk into the hospital room.
“I was always proud of you, Sammy. My baby… the pop star. Wish I… wish we could be around to see. Manda always loved your singing,” Ben informs his baby girl.
“We need to talk. Outside,” Gibbs informs Samantha.
“He only has a few hours left, agent Gibbs. Is this about Blue?” Samantha asks us when we get out in the corridor.
“It’s about you. Summer Diamond didn’t set your sister up.”
“Were you going to split the money with blue?” I demand of her in disgust.
“Or record a demo with it?” Kate adds.
“We know, Samantha. Your big sister told us,” Tony continues.
“Or more appropriately, her DNA. There’s a seventy percent match of the DNA found on the condoms in Willie Taylor’s apartment.”
“Only a sibling could be that close.”
“We also had access to your phone, Samantha.”
“Guess where the GPS chip puts you on the nights your sister and Summer Diamond died?”
“Set up Ian Hitch was a nice touch,” Gibbs adds.
“But murdering your own sister is something only a cold hearted bitch can do,” I state while glaring at her.
“It gets you out of that crappy record contract you signed, and you get all your dad’s money,” Tony adds.
“She’s dead and still screwing with my life,” Samantha hisses in anger.
“You want to say goodbye to your father? If I were you, I’d keep lying to him,” Gibbs informs her. “And don’t try murdering him, we’ll be watching you,” I add in disgust, who can kill their own family.

She walks back into the hospital room while we all watch from the outside giving them the impression of privacy. After he takes his final breath we arrest the cold clouded bitch, also known as Samantha King.

“You can never say I am a bad sister again. I have never tried killing you,” I inform Kate while sitting down on the coach to watch a movie with the popcorn on my lap.

“I guess,” Kate agrees while playing the Captain America movie we are watching together. “How can a girl get so head hearted that she can kill two people without caring?” “I don’t know. And I hope to never find out,” Kate answers me while patting Ugly Tony the second. (Yes, that is the dogs registered name.)

We watch the movie in mostly silence with the odd comment about the acting or actor. We always enjoy our movie nights, even if we go months without one. It is a tradition we begin when I first moved in with her.

“Kate, how do you if you like, like someone?” I ask Kate as she makes more popcorn after the first movie.

“Why do you ask?” She ask me without answering me.

“Well, I think I like someone but I’m not sure.”

“Well, I guess it’s the feeling of butterflies in your stomach. And the wanting to be around him, but getting tongue tied and not being able to speech probably around them. Them always being on your mind, and being the last thing you think about at night and the first in the morning. Who do you like? Is it someone I know?”

“It’s someone you know. But I don’t want to say who.”

“If I guess will you tell me?”

“Maybe.”

“Um… Um, DiNozzo?”

“Hell no, that’s disgusting.”

“McGee?”

“Worse.”

“Jimmy?” Kate ask but loses it and begins laughing at my disgusted face.

“Okay. Let’s watch the movie instead of this game of making Alice throw up,” I order Kate while moving back to the coach and picking up my dog.

“Okay. Okay. But I will guess who it is, if I have to enlist the help of Abby.”

“Have fun.”
“What do we know, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky as we walk into autopsy where Ducky is looking at a set of eyes that were mailed to a Petty officer.

“I’ve only just started, Jethro. How did these come into our possession?” Ducky asks us.

“They were in a package delivered to a Petty Officer. Mailman put them in the wrong box. Neighbour opened them up and scared the hell out of her,” I inform Ducky.

“I should imagine so. Well, these have been enucleated, and preserved with skill and care by a surgeon. Assuming they’re as healthy as they appear, transplantation would be inevitable conclusion. I don’t necessarily need your body to discover what happened to you. They say that the eyes are the windows to the soul.”

“Anybody, talk to me,” Gibbs orders everyone while we walk into the squad room where Tony is resting at his desk with his eyes open while McGee and Kate jump to their feet to greet Gibbs.

“Well, I’m checking with eye banks and the MTCs that handle tissue and organ donation,” Kate reports.

“Well, I haven’t heard back from them yet.”

“Ah… no return address on the package, boss, but I did contact the post office,” McGee reports next.

“Yeah, and?” Gibbs asks him.

“They are running the tracking number from the barcode. Yeah, I’m going to call them back right now.”

“Package was addressed to Petty Officer Second Benjamin Horlacher, stationed in Nam Neck. Currently on a seventy-two, due back tomorrow. Now that’s a seventy two hour leave there, Katie. He’s a student at the Navy and Marine Corps Intelligence Centre. Been living at that address since last September. Military records are clean. The only thing that stands out are a speeding ticket two months ago and he didn’t pay his cable bill last week,” Tony reports when Gibbs gets out of his chair and walks over to stand over Tony. After reporting Tony hands Gibbs a sheet of paper while finally sitting up probably.

“Good to know somebody is working around here,” Gibbs states.

“Hey, I’m working,” I exclaim in fake insult.

“Thank you,” Kate said into her phone before turning to Gibbs and inform him, “Do far no one’s reported missing a pair of cobalt blues, Gibbs.”

“The package was shipped two days ago from Ciudad Del Este, Paraguay,” McGee adds.

“Paraguay. The T-B-A. That’s the Tri-Border Area. It’s where Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil meet. It’s a base of operation for smugglers, drug trafficking, illegal organ trafficking,” Tony continues for the other two.

“And Hezbollah and Al Qaeda cells,” Gibbs reminds them.

“All right, we’ll meet you out front, boss. We’re going to Dam Neck!”

“You didn’t move all morning. How did you know that?” Kate hisses at Tony once Gibbs is out of hearing distances.


“You got it boss… uh, Tony,” McGee stutters out.

“Let’s move it, Kate! Alice!” Tony orders us.

“Gibbs isn’t even dead or retired and he is trying to take over already,” I hiss at Kate.

“Believe me, this isn’t the first time that fool mailman put stuff in the wrong box. I got a video of some college girls just last week flashing their, you-know-what’s,” Robinson, the apartment manager for where the eyes were delivered, informs us.
“When’s the last time you saw Petty Officer Horlacher, ma’am?” Kate asks her.
“A couple days ago.”
“What can you tell us about him?” Tony asks her next.
“He’s quiet. He keeps to himself. He’s got a girlfriend.”
“Do they live together?” I inquire of her.
“Who knows these days? She comes and goes. I think he made her a key. It’s a violation of the lease, but I looked the other way.”
“We’d like to look at Horlacher’s apartment. Is that a problem?” Gibbs asks her.
“Considering what we in that package? Please do. I see you’re not wearing a wedding ring, Agent Gibbs. Maybe you’d like to inspect that video with me when you’re done?” Robinson flirts with Gibbs making me clench my jaw in anger and another emotion that I don’t know what to call. She leads us to the apartment and opens it for us while informing us, “Now how does a fine man like that stay single?”
“Well, he didn’t. He’s been married three times,” Kate answers her.
“Hmm.”
“We’ll let you know when we’re finished, Ms Robinson,” I inform her tightly.
“Okay,” Robinson manages to get out before I close the door in her face.
“Wow. I’ll take the bedroom,” Kate informs us while looking around the apartment that looks like a women’s a home, not a man’s.
“This guy is already in trouble. Girlfriend’s taken over,” Gibbs jokes.
“Maybe not. Filling Fields, Undercover Agent,” Tony reads the first shooter video games.
“There’s make up in the bathroom. There’s women’s clothe in his closet. But I can’t say much for her taste,” Kate reports to us.
“Let’s see if we can find out her name,” I state while looking through the mail for a female name.
“Right.”
“Who the hell are you?” Horlacher demands of us while walking through the front door.
“Petty Officer Benjamin Horlacher? NCIS,” Gibbs informs him while flashing his badge at the petty officer.
“What’s going on, sir?”
“We’re here to investigate a package delivered to you, opened by your neighbour. Sent from Ciudad del Este, Paraguay.” I inform him.
“Eyes? You’ve got to be kidding me, sir,” Horlacher demands of us.
“Where’ve you been the last couple of days, Petty Officer?” Gibbs demands.
“On a seventy-two, visiting my family in New Jersey.”
“You’re training to be an intelligence analyst at Dam Neck?” Tony asks him next.
“Yes, sir.”
“What area of the world do you cover there, Petty Officer?”
“Central and South America.”
“Have you ever been to Paraguay?” Kate asks him.
“Never. Look, I don’t know what’s going on here, but I’m sure there’s…”
“Maybe your girlfriend does,” Gibbs states.
“I don’t have a girlfriend.”
“So what women is keeping all of her clothes in your bedroom?” Kate demands of her.
“We broke up a month ago. She hasn’t come back yet to pick up her stuff. I’m telling you I don’t know anything about eyes. Shouldn’t you have a warrant or something to be in here?”
“You keep yourself available, petty officer. We’ll have more questions for you,” Gibbs orders him.
“Yes, sir,” Horlacher answers making us leave the apartment in an orderly fashion.
“There was an open lipstick in the bathroom. The girlfriend’s still living here, Gibbs,” Kate informs Gibbs.
“Definitely hiding something,” Tony agrees with Kate.
“Oh, yeah,” Gibbs and I states.
“So why are we letting him walk?”
“Why are we letting him walk?” Gibbs asks before answering his ringing phone, “Yeah, Abs…? What do you got…? Today, Abby… How do you know…? Meaning…? Ducky, the short version,” He listens to Ducky for a little while before hanging up on him like normal when Ducky is rambling.
While Kate and Tony are at the stakeout, I head back to Gibbs place with him. We head straight down to his basement where he gets to work on his boat while I pull out a body on forensic science I borrowed from the library.
After an hour I head up to the kitchen and get his takeout menus to order diner for us to eat. I decide on pizza to eat.
Once the pizza arrives I take the bog back down into the basement to eat it.
“Dinner,” I call out to Gibbs while placing the food on the work bench away from the dust floating in the air near the boat.
“Thanks,” Gibbs says to me while taking a piece to eat.
“You think Tony is hitting on Kate yet?”
“What do you mean yet?”
“Still?”
“I think he will be hitting on Kate ten years after their both dead.”
“Yeah, Kate probably killed him to stop him flirting with her…. Badly.”
“At me.”
“You love him, you wouldn’t kill him on purpose.”
“Where did you get that?”
“You offered him a job,” I remind him slowly like he is an idiot.
“Years ago.”
“That doesn’t change anything at all. You still did it, and you can’t say you were insane. You have never been insane, your record is clean.”
“Who showed you my record?”
“Abby… and Ducky.”
“Why?”
“Because I said please. And Tony’s is boring.”
“You like knowing everything about people you work with.”
“Like you don’t.”
“I have never read your file.”
“I only got a file when I started working at NCIS. And you lived it, but you might have to read it. Old people can’t even remember their own coffee order, yet alone someone’s else’s life.”
“I’m not old.”
“Tell that to your hair.”
“It’s got some black.”
“Not much. I’ve seen more Black in the sky at 1200 hours.”
“Shut up and eat. Or I’ll hit you like I do DiNozzo… But it won’t be on the head.”
“What’s new?” I ask him around my bite of pizza.
“How’s your dog?” Gibbs ask me while changing the topic off his age and hair colour.
“Good. Kate wants me to change the name.”
“She picked it.”
“Yeah, but I call her, Ugly Tony the second. She doesn’t like that, she want me to just call her Tony.”
“Ah… well it’s not like you call out ‘Ugly Tony the second,’” Gibbs states but I just give him a look that says I do.
“She comes to it. And only where there is a lot of people, and Kate.”
“You like annoying people.”
“You say that like its new. Even McGee and Jimmy has worked that out,” I say while saying Jimmy
like it is a very bad word, never to be spoken.
“Just making sure you know that I know.”
“Ok. Just everyone knows that. But they just haven’t sent the memo yet,” I inform Gibbs while
packing up the pizza box to throw at after we finish eating it. Gibbs returns to working on the boat
while I throw the box in his bin and return to my book.
After reading five chapters of my book, I head up to Gibbs show and have a shower before going to
bed for the night, so I can work tomorrow without killing Tony or Kate or McGee or Jimmy.
“What do you have, Duck?” Gibbs ask Ducky the next day at the apartment where the eyes were
supposed to go, once the owner killed himself, dressed as a women.
“Well, it’s a sad situation, Jethro. Even in today’s enlightened age, transsexualism is terribly
misunderstood. His identity as a male,” Ducky begins rambling.
“Doctor?” Jimmy cuts him off.
“Yes, Mister Palmer?”
“I think Agent Gibbs was referring more to the forensic aspect of the… situation. Maybe.”
“Has head-slapping been effective for you, Jethro?”
“Yeah, look at the way DiNozzo turned out,” Gibbs informs him.
“Brain dead,” I add.
“Now the pattern of gunpowder residue on the exit wound on his back suggests the weapon was
held directly over the heart. Death was instantaneous. In all probability, he took his own life,” Ducky
reports while smiling at me.
“Boss, don’t most suicides shoot themselves in the head?” McGee informs us in confusion.
“I guess he didn’t think of himself as a man.”
“She must have known that her secret was going to come out,” Kate informs McGee.
“Don’t you mean he must’ve known that his secret was going to come out?” Tony asks Kate.
“Psychosexually speaking…”
“That’s a big word Kate. Who are you trying to impress?” I cut Kate off making her glare at me like
normal.
“Psychosexually speaking, Tony, Horlacher was a women trapped in a man’s body. And when she
killed herself, she freed herself. Thus the note.”
“Hey, you know what this reminds me of? Pacci’s suspect that we were staking out last year,”
McGee exclaims while grinning at Tony.
“That’s right! The beautiful pre-op transsexual who seduced Tony,” Kate teases Tony.
“She didn’t seduce me. I was undercover,” Tony defends himself.
“Yes, well didn’t you stick your tongue down…?”
“I took one for the team, all right? Someone had to keep her occupied.”
“Don’t you mean him?” McGee ask Kate.
“And you can’t talk Kate, you tongued and hooked up with a hermaphrodite that had both working
part.” I remind her making Kate glare at me while Tony and McGee laugh at that fact. McGee move
in the room but screws up big time when he knocks over Gibbs’ coffee.
“I’m sorry. Sorry, boss. Uh… I’m sorry. I’ll get you a fresh one. It was black, right? Black it is.”
You didn’t see anyone else enter or leave?” Gibbs demands of Tony and Kate after glaring at
McGee.
“No. she was here alone,” Kate answers him.
“All right, check his phone records. Maybe he made some other phone calls while he was deciding
to off himself.”
“Already on it. I’ll have them tomorrow,” Tony reports.
“I’m thinking there was no girlfriend, Gibbs, that he was just living a double life,” Kate adds.
“What gave you that idea? The fact he is wearing a dress or the fact he is wearing a dress?” I ask her
sarcastically.
“Puts a whole new spin on don’t ask, don’t tell,” Tony comments while grinning at me.
“And I’m more interested in the cross-dressing sailor who’s getting body parts in the mail spin. Get he-she’s laptop to Abby,” Gibbs snaps the order at us.

“Hey, Gibbs and Alice! You’re just in time. Okay, from the outside it looks like a normal laptop. But on the inside… voila! Fortified with the kind of data encryption that only someone with something to hide would have,” Abby reports as we walk into the lab, after Abby and McGee worked on the computer for a while.

“The Petty Officer’s protocols are more sophisticated than any P-G-P or D-E-S software I’ve seen,” McGee continues to report for Abby.

“At first, we didn’t even understand his obfuscation algorithm!”

“Really hard core stuff.”

“Very, very hard core.”

“Did you get in, or not?” I ask them in confusion.

“Yeah.”

“And no,” McGee adds.

“There’s just one layer we haven’t cracked yet.”

“But we did get Petty Officer Horlacher’s blog.”


“Pig Latin?” Gibbs snaps at them in confusion.

“Actually, that would be ebway oglay. Pig Latin adds way to words starting with vowels, and ay to words starting with the consonants after moving the part of the word… but I’m sure you knew that already,” McGee makes a fool of himself like normal.

“Did the bog say anything useful?” I demand of them when they continue to beat around the bush without answering us.

“It’s mostly men are from the Mar’s stuff. He was very interested in the difference between men and women,” Abby informs us.

“Men are from where?” Gibbs ask in confusion.

“Mars, Gibbs, and women are from Venus.”

“It’s a famous book about relationships and communication between the sexes,” McGee adds onto Abby explanation.

“There was a TV show, and a board game, and the guy wrote like ten sequels. I’m beginning to understand why you were married three times.”

“Abby?” Gibbs states getting her off his personal, love life.

“Come look at it for yourself.”

“Inside, every good man there is a better women. L-O-L?” I read off the blog.

“That’s laughing out loud. Which, of course, can be topped by,” McGee begins.


“Rolling on the floor laughing out loud.”

“Keep looking. Horlacher was leading two different lives. I want to know everything there is to know about both of them. A-S-A-P!” Gibbs orders the two geeks.

“Onway itway, ibbsgay!” Abby say happily to him.

“What do you have?” Gibbs demands of Tony and Kate while walking into the squad room.

“Well, I called Petty Officer Horlacher’s family. He lied about paying them a visit over the weekend. They hadn’t heard from him in over a year,” Kate reports to Gibbs.

“Still can’t find a connection to Paraguay, boss. He never deployed overseas. Doesn’t even have a passport,” Tony adds next.

“You, and what I want to know is how a suicidal transvestite attended a top-secret intelligence school without anybody noticing.”

“You contact his faculty advisor yet?” I ask them.

“I was just about to.”

“Name’s Lieutenant Commander Guyman Purcell, Retired. Got his PhD in South American studies.
I think we should interview him,” Tony informs Gibbs.

“Yeah?” Gibbs asks him.

“Why’s that?” I add.

“According to Horlacher’s phone records, he called the Commander right before he killed himself,” Tony informs us.

“That’s good work, Tony. Get the car,” Gibbs begins making Tony jump up but Gibbs then adds, “Kate.”

“Okay, now that we’ve learned a little bit about recruiting double agents, let’s take a moment to consider some of the risks involved. Anybody?” Purcell lectures the hall we are sitting in the back of his class.

“DiNozzo, would you like to become left-handed?” Gibbs threatens Tony who raised his hand to answer it, but Gibbs’ threat makes him lower it quickly.

“That would probably improve his writing, and making it readable for the first couple of days. Until he learns to write,” I whisper in Gibbs’ ear making him smirk.

“You going for your brown-nose badge this week?” Kate teases Tony.

“You’re just jealous ‘cause it’s working,” Tony defends himself.

“Yes, Ms Ellsworth. What kind of a risk does a double agent pose?” Purcell asks one of his students.

“He could double-cross you back, sir,” Ellsworth answers him like a know-it-all.

“Exactly. You have just convinced someone to betray that which he holds dearest. His country. His family. Perhaps even himself. These are weak-minded individuals. If your recruit proves untrustworthy, he must be either coerced or abandoned. But nothing can jeopardize the mission.”

“Well, this is fun. Just like being back in school,” I mumble.

“Petty Officer Horlacher is a decent student. That’s all I know about him really,” Purcell informs us after his class as we leave the building.

“Did you cover Ciudad Del Este in your class?” Gibbs asks him.

“The tri-border area. Of course, why?”

“Horlacher got a package from there,” I inform him.

“Inside were a pair of human eyes,” Kate adds.

“Cut out of a woman’s head,” Tony continues.

“God, that’s horrible. What did the petty officer say about it?” Purcell asks us.

“Claims to not know anything about it,” Gibbs states.

“Did you ever spend personal time with him outside of class, Mister Purcell?” Kate asks him.

“In my field, the students tend to see their instructors as larger than life. It’s best not to get too attached,” Purcell informs us heartlessly.

“So that would be a no?” I ask him.

“Am I being interrogated for some reason?”


“On what, Agent Gibbs?”

“Why he called you last night,” I inform him.

“Many of my students call me at home. Last night Benjamin wanted to know if I’d give him an extension on paper due this week.”

“Did you give it to him?” Gibbs inquires of him.

“Yes.”

“Good. He could use it.”

“He’s in trouble?”

“He’s dead,” I state without caring how it would affect this person.

“Killed himself last night,” Kate adds.

“Right after he got off the phone with you,” Tony informs him next.

“Why don’t we start with what you said to him?” Gibbs asks him.

“Well, this wasn’t the first time he asked for an extension. I was hard on him. I told him if he
couldn’t keep up I’d drop him from the course. It would ruin his career. I was trying to motivate him, agent Gibbs, hold his feet to the fire. I never thought he’s,” Purcell attempts to defend himself.

“Jump in?” Gibbs and I finish for her.

“The retired Lieutenant Commander’s got his own consulting business. Purcell Security Group. They specialize,” Kate reports to Gibbs, trying to get him to like her better than Tony.

“Intelligence work, boss. They’ve got several high paying government contracts. The biggest one’s is,” Tony takes over for her trying to get Gibbs to like him better.

“South corn. He travelled back and forth to Paraguay tem times in the last six months. And the area he’s been working…”

“Ciudad Del Este. I’m thinking this guy’s a spook or working for spooks.”

“Or working for spoons,” Kate overlaps Tony before continuing without Tony, “Everything concerning his consulting work has been flagged way above my clearance.”

“Great, because I hate spooks,” Gibbs snarls before answering his phone, “Yeah, Gibbs. Okay, we’re on our way.” He hangs up and turns to Kate and me while pointing to the eyes while saying, “Abby thinks she found the body that goes with those.”

“Yes!”

“About time,” I exclaim while looking at the beautiful eyes.

“Business in Central and South America comes with its own special set of problems. Are you working in a hostile environment? Are you dealing with corrupt or untrustworthy local officials? My course can make the difference between success and failure. Life and death,” Purcell says on a video on the victim’s computer.

“And there’s about four hours of online instruction classes associated with this website. They were bookmarked on Petty Officer Horlacher’s hard drive,” McGee reports.

“And after watching them, I can say with certainty Purcell needs a charisma bypass,” Abby adds.

“What does this have to do with the eyeballs, Abby?” Kate ask in confusion.

“Well, Horlacher accessed this J-peg file twenty two times last week,” McGee informs us while opening the J-peg which has a women with Purcell.

“Look familiar?” Aby ask us.

“Oh, I was right. She is beautiful,” Tony explain while pervin on the women on the plasma screen.

“How can you be sure it’s her?” Gibbs ask them.

“Because iris patterns are more distinctive than fingerprints,” Abby reports while zooming in on the beautiful eyes.

“More accurate too, boss,” Tony comments.

“The video is grainy, and the angles aren’t perfect. The lighting is…”

“Aby, is it her or not?” I cut Abby off in confusion.

“It’s an eighty percent match, Gibbs. I think we’ve got our girl.”

“A dead transsexual sailor, his spook instructor and a pair of human eyes walk into a bar. What’s the punch line, Kate?” Tony jokes back in the squad room.

“Whatever it is, it involves this girl and Paraguay,” Kate answers him.

“That’s true, but not very funny. Probie, make me laugh.”

“Okay, uh… yeah, the bartender doesn’t believe it, so he asks the spook instructor what the hell is going on. And the guy says, ‘what? A guy can’t have a drink with his pupils?’” McGee jokes but it falls flat so he says, “Nothing? Oh, come on. That was pretty funny…”

“You think this is a joke, McGee?” Gibbs snaps at McGee in disgust.

“Uh, no? No, I don’t, boss.”

“Good answer. Tony, Alice, you’re with me in MTAC. Kate get Purcell in here. We need to talk.”

“He hates me, doesn’t he?”

“Well, Hate’s a pretty strong word,” Kate attempts to make him feel better.

“More like a mild dislike.”
“And his not the only one,” I add while moving from Gibbs desk to follow him up the stairs. “You did spill his coffee,” I head Kate say before I’m out of ear shot, and court back up to Gibbs halfway up the stairs.

“Today, DiNozzo!” Gibbs calls out. DiNozzo finally court up with us as we walk into MTAC making me laugh at his puffed face. We all walk down to the front of MTAC to see that the call has already been placed and the other end is waiting on us for a change.

“I got you e-mail, Special Agent Gibbs. To tell you the truth, I was shocked. When did you learn to use a computer,” Bushnell, the person on the other end of the call, state making Gibbs smirk but I just cross my arms because I know he is going to take credit for sending the email, even knowing I am doing it.


“Ah… that didn’t work out.”

“Well, then again, some things don’t change. How can the Southern Command help you today?”

“I’m investigating a civilian contractor working out of the Tri-Border Area in Paraguay.”

“Name?”

“Guyman Purcell.”

“Yeah, I’ve heard of him. Oh yeah, he’s part of a TAT, Tactical Analysis Team, we have in Ciudad Del Este. What’s your interest in him?”

“One of his students committed suicide after receiving a pair of female eyeballs in the mail from T-B-A. We think Purcell knew the victim.”

“Body parts in the mail generally denote kidnapping. Eyes?”

“Well, yeah. That does send a hell of a message, sir.”

“Someone’s putting pressure on Purcell. But why?”

“That what I want to find out.”

“Our TATs work with a few other agencies, and they’re not always as forthcoming with information as I would like. But when’s that ever stopped us? To old times, Gunny.”

“Old times, skipper. Old times,” Gibbs agrees with Bushnell, right before the call is ended and he leave MTAC and begin following him.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Tony ask Gibbs in confusion.

“You ask me again in seven year.”

“Why seven year?”

“It’s when the freedom of information act kicks in.”

“I never knew you had a friend,” I tease Gibbs while we leave MTAC.

“I have lots of friends.”

“Fornell does not count as a person or friend. And neither does your personalities.”

“You really hate Fornell.”

“No. no I don’t hate him. I just can’t stand seeing him or my reflection when he is around. Drive a person to be nice to Jimmy or McGee.”

“Oh, that makes all the difference.”

“Si,” Abby agrees as Gibbs hands her, her caf-pow as a reward.

“Okay, that makes all the difference.”

“You know that doesn’t work with me. I always know when you’re there! Gibbs?” Abby exclaims while spinning around but I quickly hid behind the door so she doesn’t see me. Because there is no one there she turns around saying, “That’s weird.”

“Are you looking for me?” Gibbs ask while standing in front of her making her jump and I laugh at it.

“You are getting sneakier the older you get.”

“Not to mention better-looking. What have you got?”

“Well, I’m still hacking the petty officer’s files, but I uncovered some emails you’ll be interested in. I back-traced the I.S.P. they were sent from. It’s a web server in Puerto Iguazu, Argentina.”

“The Try-Border Area,” Gibbs and I inform her.

“Si,” Abby agrees as Gibbs hands her, her caf-pow as a reward.
“Do you ever feel like a puppy being rewarded?” I ask Abby with a smile as she takes a sip happily.


“You be the transsexual. I’ll be the rifle.”

“First exchange was three weeks ago.”

“I want the hundred thousand for the girl.”

“Shade girl insists on sixty and proof.”

“Swear, swear, swear, threat, swear.”

“And finally shade girl goes up to seventy five and says his controller wants proof before the money is sent.”

“Escopeta expresses is displeasure colourfully, and slips up. He uses a name. a hundred was the price. Tell Purcell his phis proof’s on the way.”

“How does a transsexual beard, Probie?”

“Proof of a life by ripping out her eyes?” Gibbs ask them.

“I don’t buy it,” I finish for Gibbs.

“Escopeta is running a kidnapping ring, boss. They set examples. You either meet the price or the person dies,” Tony offers while Gibbs phone begins ringing.

“Yeah, Gibbs… Where…? You find out what flight he’s on?” After listening to her explanation, he hangs up the phone and orders Tony, “Pack your gear. You’re going to Paraguay.”

“Alone?” Tony ask in surprise.

“Take one of them with you. I’ll start prepping the op from here.”

“Yes! I’ve always wanted to go to Paraguay!” McGee exclaims to Tony like an excited puppy making me laugh at him.

“What the hell are they doing?” Gibbs snaps in MTAC where we are watching the GPS locations for Tony and Kate who isn’t moving.

“Shacking up?” I offer.

“They are stopped about fifty feet from the TAT building,” McGee offers to Gibbs at the same time.

“Well yeah, I can see that, McGee! Get them on the satellite phone.” Gibbs snaps at McGee.

“What’s your location?” Gibbs snaps at him, “It’s fifty feet right in front of you, DiNozzo… Well yes it is. Will you quit screwing around and get moving? You’re not on vacation.”

“They are both idiots,” I mumble as Gibbs hangs the phone up.

“Patch me in to Colonel Bushnell.”

“On it. Switch over to Southern Command,” McGee agrees.

“Colonel Bushnell, my team’s at the link-up point.”

“Their in-country guide is Joe Tabarez. He’s the watch officer for the Ciudad Del Este TAT. Former Marine. Good man,” Bushnell informs Gibbs.

“Any word on Purcell?”

“Not since he came through customs. He hasn’t checked in with any of our people. He’s not in Paraguay on South Comm business.”

“What about somebody else’s business, colonel?”

“Well, that’s possible. I’m checking that angle now. I know somebody higher up in the chain of command is not making this easy, Jethro.”

“Yeah,” Gibbs agrees before ending the call.
“We I.D.’d the girl in the photo, boss,” Tony reports over MTAC.
“Name’s Anna Real. Purcell married her last year in Paraguay,” Kate adds.
“How old is she?” I demand of them.
“Seventeen.”
“And he’s been dating her for about three years,” Tony reports.
“The bastard’s a pedophile, Gibbs.”
“Tabarez knew this?” Gibbs hisses at them.
“Well, he’s the one who told us,” Tony informs us.
“I want to talk to him.”
“He’s out trying to find Purcell,” Kate reports.
“Or out fucking a fourteen year old,” I yell out them in anger.
“Or he’s having coffee with him! He looked the other was while Purcell was molesting a fourteen year old. What’s that tell you two?” Gibbs hisses at them in in anger. He turns to McGee and orders him, “Get me Bushnell.”
“On it,” McGee agrees.
“You two find me Purcell!”
“You believe I would look the other way, gunny?” Bushnell demands of Gibbs once he informed him of the age of the man’s wife.
“Well I’ll find out who and I’ll get back to you.”
“I’m going to take him down, colonel.”
“Just make sure you don’t get taken down, Jethro.”
“Special Agent McGee here’s got my back,” Gibbs say while handing McGee his coffee.
“Yeah, right.”
“Thank you. Thank you, boss,” McGee say while taking a sip of Gibbs coffee.
“What the hell are you doing?” Gibbs demands of McGee in anger.
“Well, I thought that you were giving it to me.”
“To refill it, McGee!”
“Sorry, I’ll get you another one,” McGee exclaims in fear while running out of MTAC to get Gibbs more coffee.
“How is he not dead yet?” I ask of Gibbs.
“Don’t know,” Gibbs answers me.
“Oh, yeah. I’ve seen that look before. In Bosnia. When we returned to Brcko two days after NATO ordered us out,” Gibbs comments when Bushnell gets in contact with us late in the afternoon.
“I can still smell it burning. I have been given a direct order to protect Purcell as a valuable intelligence asset,” Bushnell informs Gibbs.
“Regardless of what he’s done?”
“Regardless of what he has done.”
“With all due respect, colonel…”
“You don’t have to say it, gunny! Only two things a marine can do when he receives a direct order. Obey or resign.”
“You’re resigning your commission?”
“I will never another Brcko on my conscience.”
“Can you find out who’s protecting him?”
“Someone at the farm, but I have no way of knowing who it is.”
“Sir, how do you contact him?” McGee ask Bushnell.
“Encrypted teleconference like this.”
“You’ve seen him?” I ask in surprise.
“No. he’s always in shadow. Very corny. Like some cold war film.”
“That’s corny, but it’s effective,” Gibbs agrees with him.
“Yeah.”
“Boss, if the Colonel can get him on a teleconference, he encrypted can patch him to us,” McGee begins happily.
“Skipper!” Gibbs calls to his old friend.
“Where the hell are we, McGee?” Tony asks over the phone.
“San Gusta Street near the heart of the city. Okay, he’s turning left,” McGee reports to Tony.
“I know he turned left. I have a visual.”
“He stopped up ahead,” Kate exclaims in the background.
“Who’s he with? Okay, it’s Purcell. Should we bring him in, boss?”
“No,” Gibbs orders.
“What?”
“No, DiNozzo. You heard me. Just tail him.”
“Gibbs, wants us to follow him,” Tony relays to Kate.
“Why?” Kate asks him.
“Does it matter?” I ask her.
“They’re heading into a hotel, boss.”
“Follow. Don’t engage unless you have to,” Gibbs orders them.
“Iggy’s altitude’s increasing,” McGee informs Gibbs.
“He’s in an elevator. Third floor, DiNozzo,” Gibbs orders him before ending the phone call.

“Follow. Stand by. My farm contact’s coming on the system… now. He’s all yours, gunny,” Bushnell informs us.

“Patch me in, McGee,” Gibbs orders before turning back to the monitor he says, “Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. You either give up Purcell, or I will personally compromise the identity of this man, Ari Haswari. Our link to Al Qaeda for a child molester. You call,” Gibbs orders him, while we put up the photo of the head asshole, Ari the dead man walking.
“What next?” McGee demands when the monitor ends.
“Kill Ari, drink coffee, and kill Ari,” I answer him without a car in the world.
“Now we wait, McGee,” Gibbs answers him while giving me a small smile at my comment.
“And then we kill Ari, right boss.”
“Yes.”
“Okay, as long as it’s on the lists, it’s going to happen.”
“Boss, there’s another encrypted transmission coming up on the system,” McGee exclaims later that day.

“Put it up on the screen,” Gibbs orders making McGee doing it. On the plasma screen there is a video of Purcell walking in Paraguay and then fulling to the ground, dead. “Bring our people home.”
“When we kill Ari, we have to record it. I want to be able to re-watch it every Christmas,” I exclaim to Gibbs as we leave MTAC.
“Maybe.”
“Maybe. Always means no.”
“Really?”
“Yep.”
“I never worked that out. It would have helped me growing up.”
“I thought you were hatched like you are, grey hair and all. That reminds me, what came first, the chicken or the egg?”
“Again, not that old.”
“Riiight.”
“Gibbs you in?” I ask while walking down the steps into his basement, hoping he is alone, I would hate to walk in on him with someone again.
“Down here,” Gibbs calls while I walk down to see him sanding the boat rib again.
“When do you stop sanding that once rib?”
“When it’s perfect.”
“When’s that?”
“When it is,” Gibbs answer me as I walk over to the seat in the corner like normal when I am down here.
“That’s like saying, your sister will stop trying to kill you when she does. Or dinner is down when it is.”
“What are you doing here?”
“Kate’s not home yet. She wanted another day alone with Tony.”
“Okay.”
“Yeah, that’s what I said. Followed by use protection, because I’m not giving my room or sleep up for something that screams, craps, and sleeps.”
“That go over well?”
“Nope. She is going to kill me. And then see what I put in her room.”
“What did you do to your sister’s room?”
“I may or may not have covered it in condoms. And condoms full of water to the busting point… and condoms full of glitter and water… and glitter.”
“Why?”
“Because I can. It’s fun to watch her head explode. On an unrelated, are you opposed to a new roommate?”
“You think she’s going to kick you out?”
“Well, yes. She had last time, if I did this again, I’m homeless.”
“So you did it again?”
“Of course. Had to.”
“You need help.”
“What, you think I need more glitter in her room? You can help.”
“Not that type of help.”
“Fine. Your lose,” I mumble as Gibbs returns to the boat while I clean up our dinner and throw the rubbish out. Cleaning up, I return to my book again, and listening to Gibbs sanding the boat rib.
“Alice,” I hear Kate scream while walking into Gibbs house the next morning making me jerk awake and almost fall out of Gibbs bed. I get up and walk down the stairs to see her glaring at me, while begin completely covered in glitter.

“Yes, my loving and kind sister,” I ask her innocently as Gibbs walks up from the basement to see what the hell is happening.

“What the hell did you do to my room?”

“I don’t know what you are talking about.”

“Don’t lie to me. My room is covered in glitter.”

“Oh, that. Yeah I did that. What about it?”

“What about it? What about it? My room is covered in glitter and water.”

“Well. In my defence, I wanted you to think it was Tony or someone else. What made you think it was me? You know for future reference?”

“Because you’re the only one with a key and who would do it,” Kate hisses at me while a vain bounces in her forehead because of the anger.

“I’m not the only… there is… I may not have thought this throw. And I haven’t had coffee it.”

“May not?”

“Possibly.”

“Alice.”

“Kate. I need coffee” I copy her while walking to the kitchen for coffee.

“You got glitter and water in my computer.”

“What was it doing in your room?”

“What were you doing in my bedroom?”

“The only thing that ever happens in that room, making bad decisions,” I explain to her while grabbing a pot to boil the water in.

“That is not the only thing that happens in there.”

“Really? You truly believe that?”

“This is beside the point. I have been way from home, I was looking forward to sleeping in my bed. But know I need to clean it up before I can sleep.”

“Well, not my fault.”

“How is this not your fault?”

“The water was in condoms…”

“You have condoms? Why do you have condoms?”

“To put water and glitter in.”

“Alice.”

“What do you think I was using them for?”

“Well, I only recently found out you watch porn. What else do I not know about you? You can be.”

“We talking about this again? Haven’t we already spoken about that?”

“Nope we have. Alice. Talk to me, come on.”

“What do you want to know?” I ask her while grabbing three mugs out of the cupboard and put coffee in them.

“How about the truth?”

“Oh that. I did put glitter in your room.”

“ALICE,” Kate hisses at me while Gibbs walks in to get his coffee.

“Why were you watching porn?” Gibbs demands of my tightly.

“Fine. You want to know the truth, I have never watched porn, I just said that to piss Tony off. I meet the guy at my coffee shop that morning and thought, ‘hey you look like the ugly idiot.’ And went and spoke to him. He gave me his autograph and biology,” I inform them innocently.

“I don’t believe you,” Kate hisses at me.
“The book is signed at work in the second draw of Gibbs’ desk.”
“You’re telling the truth,” Gibbs ask in surprise while pouring the hot water into the mugs.
“Why is that so surprising?”
“Well, you said it with a straight face,” Kate defends everyone.
“I told McGee and Tony they did a good job. I have said your right. And that I enjoy mum’s cooking, all with a straight face. This was a cake walk.”
“Why did you say you watched him from when you were younger?” Gibbs integrates me.
“Because, I’m not going to tell Tony I got off to someone with his face. He would think I am interested in him. But if I was younger, I didn’t know better.”
“Your brain work weirdly,” Kate informs me while taking a sip of her coffee I made, with so much sugar it should make her sick.
“You have known me my whole life and your only just releasing this know?”
“Yes. I thought you would become normal, one day. Back to the point through, you need to clean my room. You’re the one who messed it.”
“No I didn’t. I just placed the glitter and water in the room, you’re the one who popped the holders of the glitter and water,” I defend myself while walking back to lounge and sitting on the ancient couch.
“Doesn’t matter. Come home and help me clean it up,” Kate orders me.
“But I just made coffee.”
“Finish your coffee first,” Kate agrees with me while sitting on the couch beside me. Gibbs takes his coffee back down to the boat in the basement.
“How do you think Gibbs gets the boat out of his basement?” I ask Kate in confusion, because it’s not possible.
“Why don’t you ask him?”
“I did and he says that he gets it out, the same way he gets the wood in.”
“That’s not helpful.”
“I know right.”
“What are you wearing?” Kate ask now she has calmed down enough to notice I am not wearing my own clothe, but a big NIS sweater.
“A NIS sweater.”
“What is NIS?”
“NIS is what NCIS was called when Gibbs joined. I was not sleeping in my jeans and red shirt that is just unconfutable.”
“Okay. I didn’t know that.”
“Neither did I, until I was told when I ask Abby.”
“Why not ask Gibbs? You are hear often enough.”
“We don’t talk.”
“What do you do?”
“Read, Abby loaned me a book, I sit in the basement and read about the forensic while Gibbs builds his boat.”
“I thought you two spoke the night away.”
“Sometime we talk more at work then in the basement.”
“Really?”
“Yes.”
“XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
“How do we do this?” I ask Kate while looking at her bedroom that is completely covered in glitter and water.
“I don’t know,” Kate admits while looking around the mess.
“I don’t think this throw,” I admit while picking up one of the unbusted condoms.
“No you didn’t.”
“I’ll get the mop and bucket.”
“We’ll need towels too.”
“You get that,” I inform her while leaving to get our mop and bucket to clean the mess that is Kate’s room. I walk back into the room to see Kate attempting to clean up some of the water off her bed. I begin us the mop to pick up so of the water off the floor. As we move through the room we find that half the condoms didn’t even break on her bed making me pout as I work on the mess of the floor.

“How much time did you spend working on this prank?” Kate ask me while removing the blanket and sheets off the bed.

“I didn’t leave here to head to Gibbs until around 7ish. So 6 hours to plan and finish it,” I answer her.

“How can you… what time did you finish work?”

“Five. Gibbs let us leave without doing the paperwork.”

“So you had two hours to fill all of these?”

“Yep.”

“Hey Ducky, sorry I’m last,” I exclaim on while walking into the coffee shop on Sunday.

“It’s quite alright,” Ducky say to my happily while I take a seat across from him.

“How’s your weekend been?”

“Good. What about you?”

“I have sent the whole weekend cleaning Kate’s room.”

“Why?”

“A prank I pulled with glitter and water.”

“Why would you do that?”

“Because I haven’t played one on her in months. Since maybe Christmas.”

“You like pranking?”

“Yep. It’s fun. What did you do this weekend?”

“Read. And look after mother.”

“Sounds like fun. But mine was better.”

“Depends how you look at it. I spent my weekend relaxing, while you spent it doing chores and work.”

“No, no, don’t point out the floor in my prank. I worked it out when Kate woke me up to yell out me. Before my coffee.”

“So, what do you want to talk about?”

“How about how you meet my ‘loving’ mother?”

“Well, that’s an interesting story. I was out having dinner at a bar after a hard day of work, and a beautiful girl walks in. well we begging talks. One thing lead to another…”

“And you did the horizontal tango.”

“That’s one way of pointing it.”

“Thank you, kind sir,” I say in a fake southern accent. I continue in my normal voice, “Have you got any other kids?”

“No. not that I know off.”

“So maybe. But Abby hasn’t found them yet. Cool, there maybe someone else for me to torment until they disown me.”

“You need help.”

“Funny, that’s what everyone I have ever met tell me.”

“Well, they are right.”

“If you say so.”
“What’s new, Abs?” Tony asks as Abby walks into the squad room while we wait for a case to pop up.

“Hey, Tony. I’m digging the tie. Is it new?” Abby asks him while looking at Tony’s tie.

“Yeah, I just got it last weekend. It’s Zegna.”

“I like.”

“I’m glad. I paid over hundred bucks for it.”

“Why do you always do that?” Kate hisses at Tony in anger.

“What?”

“You always have to announce how much you paid for your clothes. It’s weird.”

“What’s weird? Abby asked me about my tie. I answered. It’s called a conversation, Kate.”

“No, Abby asked you if it was new. She didn’t ask you how much you paid for it. The two things have no correlation.”

“Well, if I didn’t pay for it, then it wouldn’t be new, now would it?”

“What is the point of bragging to us about how much you spend on your clothes? We work with you. We all know how much you make.”

“I don’t,” McGee jumps in in confusion.

“You don’t count or matter,” I cut in while writing up a report on Gibbs computer for him.

“Look, all I’m trying to say is that it’s not very professional. Gibbs would never walk in here and tell us how much he paid for his shirt,” Kate defends herself.

“That’s because the prices have been pretty consistent at Sears since the late seventies,” Tony informs stupidly as Gibbs walks into the squad room without Tony releasing.

“We have a body in Virginia beach. McGee?” Gibbs exclaims while walking over to his desk.

“Yeah?” McGee asks Gibbs in confusion because he normal talks to Tony.

“Call Ducky.”

“You got it.”

“Hey boss, have you had a chance to sign off on that missing person’s report I gave you?” Tony begs of Gibbs.

“No, DiNozzo, I haven’t. I tried to get it last night, but Sears was having a sale,” Gibbs answers Tony sarcastically.

“Oh, you are so dead,” I whisper to Tony while laughing at that fact as we all follow Gibbs to the elevator.

“I give him five seconds,” Kate whispers to McGee and me when we arrived at the beach that is the crime scene and there is a bikini contest earlier today.

“Until what?” McGee asks in confusion.

“Until Tony notices there’s a…”

“Bikini contest?!” Tony exclaims in happy, horny, surprise.

“It’s over, DiNozzo. Gear up,” Gibbs states with an annoyed tone of voice because he is still annoyed at Tony’s comment back at the squad room when he thought he was safe from Gibbs.

“Agent Gibbs? Lieutenant Sommers, Virginia Beach Police. I assume you want to take this one,” Sommers exclaims while walking up to us.

“You assume correctly, Lieutenant.”

“As soon as we found her Norfolk I.D. card, we cleared out. I brought in extra men just to seal off the area.”

“Bikini’s don’t leave anywhere for an I.D. to be put,” I comment.

“There was a small beach bag next to her in the stall.”

“What is Volt Entertainment?” Gibbs asks in confusion while looking at the banners for the contest.

“IT’s a local cable channel that caters to men. They air all of the contests.”
“I’ll get a dub,” Kate reports to Gibbs before Tony can.

“Who discovered the body?” I ask the lieutenant.

“An elderly woman at about fourteen hundred. She notified one of my men shortly after. She was pretty frantic,” Sommers reports.

“Where is she?” Gibbs asks him.

“She’s in my car back there,” Sommers reports before Gibbs begins walking to the crime scene and away from the car, “You don’t want to see her, agent Gibbs?”

“Kate.”

“He’s not really one for chit-chat,” Kate inform the lieutenant before we follow Gibbs leaving Tony talking to the lieutenant.

“Hey, DiNozzo,” Gibbs calls out when Tony takes too long talking to the lieutenant.

“Right behind you, boss,” Tony calls out while jogging to catch up.

“That is one hell of a swirlie,” Tony exclaims when we look at the victim with her head in the toilet.

“A swirlie?” McGee ask in confusion.

“You take a Geek by the ankles, dunk them in the toilet, then flush,” I explain to McGee before adding, “Do you want me to demonstrate. There is two other toilets I can use.”

“Usually reserved for dorks. Does it look familiar, probie?” Tony agrees with me.


“If you three don’t start working, I will show you hazing. And the marine corps does not do wedgies or Noogies or Melvins,” Gibbs threatens us.

“Thank you, boss,” Tony exclaims as we get back to work.

“DiNozzo, measure and sketch these footprints.”

“You think she made them, boss?”

“Well, they do match her shoes,” I comment while pointing to the bottom of her shoes.

“No smudged. No sign of panic. Think she went to the toilet voluntarily?”

“No sign of a struggle. No bruises on her arms or neck,” Gibbs comments.

“Why wouldn’t she run or fight back?” McGee asks in confusion.

“Maybe she didn’t have a chance to. She could been in the vomiting position when she was attacked,” Tony offers.

“That’s good, DiNozzo,” Gibbs praises Tony making me smirk because there is a rug pull coming.

“Thanks, Boss.”

“Now get down on the floor and start sketching her footprints.”

“This is a public restroom, boss. It’s disgusting.”

“It could be worse.”

“How could it be worse?”

“Could be a men’s room,” I comment while looking around the female restroom.

“Ah, Jethro,” Ducky exclaims while walking into the bathroom.

“Hey, Duck. DiNozzo and McGee will be done in a few minutes,” Gibbs offers to Ducky.

“Oh, no hurry. It takes time to do detailed and concise work. Mister Palmer, here, finishes his work quite quickly.”

“Thank you, Doctor,” Jimmy exclaims happily because Ducky ‘complemented him.’

“Well thank you, Sergeant Klien. You have been very helpful. Thanks,” Kate says on her phone as Gibbs and I walk out to the boardwalk where she is talking to the victim’s commanding officer. She hangs up the phone and turns to us saying, “Her name was Petty Officer Tiffany Jordan. Her C.O. said she was deployed on the U.S.S. Monroe for the last fifty-seven days. Ship returned to port yesterday about this time.”

“What did the witness say?” Gibbs questions her.

“She doesn’t usually use public restrooms. Has a phobia.”

“This wouldn’t have helped. Victim’s address?” I ask her.

“Nine-three-seven0five Rosewood Drive, Norfolk,”
“Come on, let’s go,” Gibbs orders us while walking over to the car.

“She keeps a clean place,” Kate comments when we walk into Tiffany’s apartment.

“Yeah, well she probably didn’t see much of it,” Gibbs comments while looking around.

“Battling the budge, by Jeff Drixon. Looks to me like Jeff is losing the battle. How to lose fifteen pounds in fifteen days. Sing is a choice. They’re ask weight loss books,” Kate comments while looking through the bookshelf.

“These are all work out videos,” I comment while picking up the videos in confusion, who would want to lose weight off a video.

“Preoccupied with weight loss, vomiting before an attack – it sounds like an eating disorder. Gibbs, take a look at this,” Kate call over to us while looking at fresh flowers on the table in the apartment. She picks up the card that is in the middle of the flowers and reads out loud, “Tiff, I hope you enjoy my letters. I live for the day that we can be together. Love, John.”

“Romantic,” Gibbs comments.

“Flowers are fresh. He delivered them himself.”

“How do you know that?” I ask her in confusion.

“Florists put their insignia on their cards. This car’s blank. Don’t you ever get flowers?” Kate informs me before asking Gibbs about his personal life.

“I don’t like gifts that require attention,” Gibbs answer her.

“These are all bills from before she left. Where are the letters?” I comment while looking through the mail in the room.

“You think she trashed them?” Kate asks us next.

“She never got them. She’s been at sea for the past two months,” Gibbs remind us.

“Right. So yesterday she should have returned home to a stack of mail.”

“What do we have, Duck?” Gibbs asks Ducky as we walk into autopsy to see our poor victim on the table being cut up.

“Well, no shortage of water in her lungs. She definitely drowned,” Ducky informs us.

“Any internal damage?” I ask him in sympathy for the victim that would be a horrible way to die.

“Her esophagus is quite worn as if she’s been vomiting excessively.”

“Was she bulimic?” Gibbs demands of him.

“Possible, but not probably. Her throat shows little evidence fo self-regurgitation. Preliminary test conclude that her bout with hyper emesis was caused by a hormonal imbalance. Particularly, a drastic rise in her estrogen level.”

“Morning sickness?” Gibbs and I ask him in unison.

“Indeed. Our young exhibitionist was pregnant.”

“Abby didn’t find any foreign prints on the bouquet or the beach bag, and that means one of you had better give me a lead. DiNozzo,” Gibbs snaps at Tony, Kate and McGee as we walk into the squad room after failing to get answers from Abby yet.

“I talked to Petty officer Jordan’s rack mate from the Monroe. She said Jordan brought an early pregnancy test during a brief stop at king’s bay,” Tony reports happily.

“She knew she was pregnant. Any idea about the father?” I ask Tony while moving over to Gibbs desk with him. I sit on the desk behind Gibbs chair while Gibbs sits down in his chair for the moment until we get a lead.

“She used a payphone to call him, but his cell was turned off. She said she left a message.”

“That’s your worst nightmare, Tony,” Kate comments putting herself in the spotlight.

“How’s it going with those letters, Kate?”

“Working on it. Thanks, Tony,” Kate hisses at him in anger.

“How long?” Gibbs demands.

“Two days… three, tops.”
“You’ve got four.”
“Really?”
“Hours.”
“Sounds about right.”
“McGee! Are you waiting for me to announce you?” Gibbs demands of McGee who is standing, waiting for his turn to speak.
“No, I’m sorry. I pulled the phone records from petty officer Jordan’s apartment. Only one call since she returned. It was yesterday at eleven hundred to a Lisa Kerr,” McGee reports to Gibbs.
“Two hours prior to Ducky’s estimated time of death. This address her work or her home?” I ask McGee while snatching the address he is trying to hand Gibbs.
“Both. She’s an at-home yoga instructor.”
“Good job, McGee. DiNozzo, Alice, you’re with me,” Gibbs orders us while getting up and heading to the elevator.
“Right behind you, boss. Three hours fifty minutes,” Tony calls while following us and taunting Kate on his way past.

“Thanks for having me come along, boss. I know when it comes to women, I sometimes I get a little distracted. I just want to let you know that I appreciate this vote of confidence. What I’m trying to say is I’m not going to let you down. I’m going to be attentive and meticulous to every detail in my notes. Oblivious to any distraction,” Tony promise Gibbs while Gibbs pulls up at the house.
“We’re here,” Gibbs exclaims while Tony is daydreaming over the yoga possess in the front yard. Gibbs and I get out of the car while Tony is still sitting there.
“Tony DiNozzo,” I yell right in Tony’s ear making him jump and then get out.
“Oh yeah. I’m with you, boss!” Tony exclaims while getting out of the car.
“DiNozzo, your PDA,” Gibbs reminds him when he leaves it in the car.
“Right. There it is. Got it. Sorry about that.” Tony exclaims while running back to the car and grabbing it through the window and catching back up to us, he continues, “Not a great start, huh, Boss?”
“Could’ve been better,” I state.
“Sorry.”
“You’ve got to get your forehead to the ground. Nice long stretch. Let the head just hang,” Lisa, the instructor, orders the yoga class while demonstrating the position.
“Lisa Kerr?” Gibbs calls out to her.
“Yes?”
“Hi. Special agent Gibbs, NCIS. Special agent DiNozzo. Probationer agent Todd. We have a few questions for you.”
“Of course. Yeah. All right, Sally?”
“Yeah?” Sally calls out, she is one of the people taking the class.
“Please take over the class for a second.”
“Oh, sure. Sure.”
“I don’t know if it’s hit me yet,” Lisa informs us while walking and talking about our victim.
“You were close?” I ask her softly.
“As close as you can be to a girl in the navy, when she was here for one month and gone the next.”
“How’d you meet?” Gibbs ask her next.
“She signed up for my tantric yoga class a little over a year ago. It combines physical fitness with the ability to heighten a woman’s pleasure during prolonged lovemaking.”
“I’ll reboot,” Tony promise when he hits a button on his PDA making it crash when she informs us about the possibility of heighten sexual experience.
“Who was Tiffany romantically involved with?” I ask her politely.
“I’ve never known her to date anyone. In fact, she was the only one in the class who was in the class for physical fitness. She wanted to lose ten pounds for a shoot,” Lisa reports to us without giving us a lead.
“Shoot? Gibbs ask her.
“Yeah. She was doing a spread with two other girls for GSM. It was called naughty in the navy. It
hit the stands a couple months ago.”
“I remember that issue. Good layout” Tony comments making me give him a disgusted look.
“I am going to regret this, but what is GSM?” I ask them.
“Get sum magazine. It’s like playboy but less risqué. They both have really great articles.”
“The Navy respond?” Gibbs ask Lisa after giving Tony a look that says shut up.
“Oh, it was revealing, but it wasn’t nude. So she got a slap on the wrist. I’ve got a copy of it inside.
Do you guys want to see it?” Lisa ask us.
“That won’t be necessary,” Tony informs her.
“Why won’t it?” Gibbs demands of him.
“I make a point of keeping all my copies. Like I said, great articles.”
“I don’t want to touch anything that you like the ‘articles’ of,” I comment before turning to Lisa and
state to her, “Tiffany called you yesterday.”
“Yeah, she said that she was back in town and that she wanted to see me that night, and she needed
to talk to me,” Lisa informs us.
“About what?” Gibbs demands of her.
“Never said.”
“I’m surprised you’re still looking for information about Tiffany.”
“Hey Lisa!” Kevin, a good looking man, calls while running over to us with a surf board under one
of his arms.
“Hey, how was it?”
“Ah, it was all blown out. Not a wave worth paddling after.”
“Should’ve gone with me for the a.m. sets. Waves were overhead and clean all morning. They’re
from NCIS. Guys, this is my fiancé Kevin Holt.”
“Hi.”
“Hey,” Gibbs responds to him while shaking his hand in greeting.
“Any suspects yet?”
“We’re working on it,” Tony comments.
“Girls get murdered in public during a bikini contest. I don’t know, you’d think it would be pretty
simple.”
“You’d think,” I comment.
We’re finished here,” Gibbs informs us. We all shake hand in goodbye and leave back to the car
where I get the front seat before Tony making have to sit in the back.

“I knew she looked familiar,” Tony comments while there is a photo of Lisa on his computer from
years earlier while sitting at his desk in the squad room.

“What?” Gibbs ask in confusion.
“Lisa Kerr. She’s the daughter of mister Kerr. You know, from Mister Kerr’s Cupcakes?”
“Oh, yeah. Well that explains the house,” I comment.
“And she’s in all the commercials. It was driving me crazy because I was trying to figure out where
I knew her from.”
“Why didn’t you just ask her?” Gibbs ask him in confusion.
“I was kind of afraid to.”
“Why?”
“Well, I’ve had a lot of short-lived relationships and I kind of have a hard time remembering all of
them.”
“I have the same problem with ex-wives.”
“The name’s Jonathan Redding. He’s written our victim four letters in the last six weeks. And the
writing indicates classic stalker. If he can’t have her no one can,” Kate reports while walking over to
us.
“Sounds like our guy,” Tony comments happily.
“Do we have a return address?” I ask her.
“Cell block F, he’s in the Danville Correctional Facility,” Kate informs us.
“It can’t be easy,” Tony complains.
“Well I still think we should talk to him. We can’t just ignore evidence like this.”
“What evidence? The guy’s still in prison.”
“Not anymore. I just spoke to Danville’s Assistant Warden. Jonathan Redding was paroled thirteen days ago,” McGee reports to us. At hearing this we all give a tired look at that fact while Kate moves to his desk to do a background on the dirt bag. While they are doing this, I head to the elevator for a coffee run because we are going to need it for this case.
I walk to the coffee shop at the corner of the block. I walk in ordering us all coffee, I have memorize everyone’s orders and I get food too. Because if I don’t buy food, we just forget lunch when we are working a case.
I take the coffees and food back to the squad room.
“I got coffee,” I call out while walking into the squad room. I hand everyone a coffee and sandwich. The last person I hand out is Gibbs who nodes in thanks while I find his sandwich and cookie.
“Thanks, Alice,” Gibbs says while taking a bite of his food.
“Thanks Alice,” Kate, McGee and Tony copy Gibbs, Tony says it around a mouthful of food. After we all eat our lunch Kate reads her report.
“Jonathan Redding was arrested for assault and battery in May of oh-one. He had two priors before that. Violation of a restraining order and possession of narcotics. Two of his three arrests involved ex-girlfriends,” Kate reports.
“Are we locate him?” Gibbs demands from his spot in his desk chair behind his desk.
“I phoned his registered address, they claim they haven’t seen him,” McGee reports.
“His parole officer?” I ask him.
“I phoned him as well, still waiting to hear back,” McGee adds but when Gibbs give him the look he adds quickly, “I’m going to call him again.”
“This guy definitely fits the profile,” Kate informs us happily.
“All we have is a rap sheet and some fan mail. Even when we find him, we can’t detain him,” Gibbs reminds her.
“That may be true, boss. Redding former cellmates saw the murder on the news. He said he has some information we should hear,” Tony reports to Gibbs.
“In exchange for what?” I ask him before taking a sip of my coffee.
“Depending on what he gives us, the D.A. may cut him a deal.”
“You got it. Kate, with me,” Tony orders Kate while leaving the squad room.
“No, that’s all for now. Thank you very much,” McGee says into his phone at his desk in the squad room, before hanging up and turning to Gibbs and reporting, “Boss, I located Redding. He is working at the Water Wheel Car Wash. It’s only two miles away from where Petty Officer Jordan was attacked.”
“We should’ve had him three hours ago,” Gibbs informs McGee while moving over to his desk.
“I’m sorry about that. I kept hitting dead ends.”
“Learn to anticipate, McGee,” I snap at her.
“Anticipate?”
“Always think a step ahead. You shouldn’t ever have to waste time deciding what to do next,” Gibbs informs him.
“Anticipate.”
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his ringing phone while McGee begins to thing about what is going to happening next. “Do you think he was obsessed…? Or her without him… yeah, we’re on our way,” Gibbs informs who he is talking to her. He hangs up and turn to McGee to begin, “Hey, McGee! Get the…”
“Keys to the car,” McGee finished for him while holding up the car keys.
“Keys to the car,” Gibbs finishes.
“If only Kate and Tony was that fast to teach,” I whisper in Gibbs ear making him laugh at me.

“We’re a little out of place, McGee,” Gibbs comments looking around the car wash where everyone is wearing jeans and t-shirts, nothing like the
“Feels like high school,” McGee comments.
“What the hell is that?” Gibbs ask while looking at a car with spinning wheels.
“Believe it’s an Escalade, boss.”
“The wheels, McGee.”
“The rims are called spinners,” I inform Gibbs.
“What’s the point?”
“It’s a hip hop thing,” McGee explains.
“It’s to inform women you’re interested in that you have a small dick,” I explain to both of them. (I apologies if you have one, that is what my dad always tells us. If you have a big car, lift kit, spinners, anything like that, it is because you are compensating for a small dick. It might not be the real reason but it is mine.)
“The more I know the less I understand,” Gibbs informs us while ignoring my explanation for the moment.
“I think they are something Tony would have on his car.”
“Afternoon, gentlemen and lady. Your sedan looks like it could use a wash,” Garrison, one of the workers at the carwash, comes over to us while trying to get more work.
“We’re looking for Jonathan Redding,” Gibbs informs him while showing him his badge.
“I’m Rodney, Jon’s supervisor. Is there something I can help you with?”
“Yeah, you can point him out for us,” I inform him.
“He’s right over here. I’ve got him driving today. Jon do something wrong?”
“Jonathan Redding!” Gibbs calls out to the suspect who looks at us and takes off running.
“Stop! Federal agent! Where is he going?” McGee calls out to him before chasing the suspect throw the working car wash while Gibbs and I exchange looks of annoyance before walking to the exit where the two men have to exit. Gibbs grabs the soaking wet suspect as he leave.
“Anticipate, McGee,” Gibbs yells out him in anger. How hard is it to realise that if he runs into the working carwash there is only two exits? Just have a person on each exit and no one has to get wet.

“Finally. I’ve been sitting here twenty minutes!” Redding exclaims as we walk into integration.
“I’m sorry, Jon. I asked them to put out refreshments,” Gibbs informs him sarcastically.
“They must have forgotten,” I finish.
“Why am I here?” Redding demands of us as we take the seat across from him.
“Because killing people is illegal,” Gibbs informs us.
“I didn’t kill anyone!”
“Then why did you run? Innocent people don’t run,” I state.
“Because I owed the wrong people a lot of money when I went away.”
“Drugs?” Gibbs ask him.
“And now that I’m out they’re looking to collect. I saw two guys coming at me and I reacted,” Redding exclaims making me squint my eyes, I was there too. Gibbs hands him the evidence bag with one of the letters he sent the victim making the suspect read it. After a moment he exclaims in anger, “Where’s you get this?”
“The same place we got the other three,” I inform him.
“Petty Officer Jordan’s P.O. Box,” Gibbs finishes for me.
“She never got them?” Redding ask in surprise.
“IS that why you killed her?”
“Because she wouldn’t respond to you?” I ask him.
“I didn’t kill her. I loved her,” Redding exclaims to us in anger.
“Where were you Saturday between twelve and one fifteen p.m.” Gibbs demands of him.
“I was there. I was at the contest.”
“You’re not helping your cause much here, Jonny Boy,” I comment.
“I went there because I wanted to talk to her! Tell her how much she means to me!”
“Why didn’t you tell her than when you delivered the flowers?” Gibbs ask him.
“She wasn’t home! So I left them at the door. I didn’t see her at the contest either. I waited, but she
never came out.”
“Did you go by yourself?” I ask him.
“Yep. Showed up about half hour before it started. I stood right in front of the stage until it was over.
I didn’t kill her. I just wanted to be a part of her life. You have to believe me.”
“What’s the problem, Abs?” Gibbs ask Abby in the lab when Abby tries to play the video of the
bikini contest but we just get snow.
“I’m not really sure. The picture was crystal clear when I tested it. There we go,” Abby explains
before rewinding the video so we can see it.
“What happened?” McGee ask Abby.
“Tone forgot to rewind.”
“Thanks Abs,” Tony says when Abby puts him in the spot light and Kate glares at him in disgust.
“You already watched this?” Kate hisses at him.
“I glanced at it.”
“He took it home,” Abby informs us with a smile.
“What is wrong with you? It’s like you have some sort of a sickness,” Kate angrily exclaims at Tony.
“I had a hunch there might be something on it.”
“Yeah, like ten half-naked women.”
“Queue it up from the beginning,” Gibbs orders Abby while ignoring Kate and Tony.
“Got it. It was a two-camera shoots. One was on the stage and the other was on the crowd for their
reactions,” Abby explains while playing the two videos on the plasma screen.
“Stop. Zoom in on B. That’s him right there. Keep running,” I exclaims while pointing to our
suspect.
“He’s where he said he was,” Kate says in surprise.
“Yeah, but he still has until one fifteen to slip away,” McGee reminds her.
“Speed it up, Abs,” Gibbs orders her so we can see if the suspect leaves.
“It’s past one fifteen, boss,” McGee says while watching the time on the video where we are closer
to two then one.
“He’s telling the truth,” Gibbs says in surprise.
“Jonathan Redding did not kill Petty Officer Jordan,” I finish for him in disappointment. Not only do
we have the wrong person but we just wasted hours of time on catching the correct person, who we
have no lead on yet.
“Where’s Gibbs?” Tony ask while walking into the squad room the next morning, late like normal.
“I don’t know. But we do report to him, remember?” Kate answer him while looking up from his
computer but Tony just stares at me waiting for me to answer.
“I think I found us a lead.”
“Really, you are the last person I expected to say that,” I exclaim in surprise making Tony have me
an annoyed look. But he answers McGee’s question by holding up his copy of GSM making us give
him a disgusted look.
“Honestly, Tony, you need help,” Kate exclaim in disgust.
“You’ll sing a different tune when I show this to Gibbs,” Tony promises while looking at the
magazine.
“Show me what?” Gibbs demands while walking into the squad room and straight over to his desk,
making me have to get out of his chair.
“O was thumbing through Petty Officer Jordan’s layout, and I found something I thought you should
see. These two photos weren’t taken by the magazine. They got them from her,” Tony explains
while showing Gibbs the two photos in the magazine.

“Why?” I demand in confusion.

“Something GSM likes to do. Gives the reader a voyeuristic look into the girls’ lives.”

“Who do you think took the photos?” McGee innocently ask Tony while looking over his shoulder.

“Probie, back it up a little bit.”

“Sorry,” McGee apologise while moving away from Tony.

“In the article, petty officer Jordan said they were taken by her boyfriend.”

“I thought she didn’t date.”

“Well, she was pregnant, McGee. There’s only one way that can happen.”

“Did you contact, GSM?” I ask Tony, getting them off our victim’s personal life.

“I did. They said the photos were taken by a local photographer named Jason Kaplan. He’s a freelancer they work with a lot.”

“Check it out,” Gibbs orders him.

“Okay, don’t worry, boss. I’ll keep it professional.”

“Yep, I know you will because Kate’s going with you.”

“I am?” Kate ask in surprise.

“Seems like an in and out job, boss. Are you sure that that’s really necessary?” Tony ask Gibbs who just stare at him until he adds, “He’s sure.”

“What do you have, Abs?” Gibbs ask Abby who is running around the lab collecting all her paperwork from this case.

“A serious hatred of wax,” Abby informs him.

“I think you look stressed. Want some coffee,” I inform Abby before offering her my coffee.

“I compared our victim’s wax to over a hundred different products. Each one just one molecule different from the next. Do you know how small a molecule is?”

“I do,” McGee exclaims happily.

“Shut up, McGee.”

“I really like this new Abby,” Tony comments happily.

“And after many fun-packed hours of nothing but wax, I found a match.”

“Does that say sex wax?” Kate exclaims while reading the label of the wax that matches the wax in the victim’s hair.

“That it does. It comes in cool, warm and tropical.”

“How does it work?” McGee ask Abby in confusion.

“Don’t worry about it, Probie. I’m pretty sure you still need a girl first,” Tony informs him.

“It’s not like that, mister Zog’s sex wax is a brand made for surfers,” Abby corrects Tony.

“Surfers?” Gibbs and I ask her together.

“Yeah. They put it on their boards to help with traction.”

“Thanks Abby,” I exclaim while we all leave the lab together.

“Hello, Kevin,” Gibbs say to Kevin when we arrive in the yard to see Kevin.

“Oh, my friends from NCIS. What do you know, boys?” Kevin exclaim when he sees us.

“More than you’d like us to,” Tony promises.

“Come again?”

“We know about your relationship with Tiffany Jordan,” I inform him.

“What relationship? Her and Lisa were friends. I barely knew her.”

“Yeah well, you knew her well enough to take intimate photos of her. do you do that with all of Lisa’s friends?” Gibbs ask him.

“Your lighting needed work,” Tony informs him.

“Look, fellas, it’s not what you think. Okay? Her and I – we hung out a couple of times, you know? It was totally innocent. She asked me to help take some photos for this magazine, so I helped her out,” Kevin defends himself.

“Generous of you. Lisa know about the photos?” I ask him.
“No. no, she didn’t even know that Tiffany and I were friends.”
“Well, with nothing going on, why the big secret?” Gibbs demands if him.
“Look, Lisa is very insecure. Okay, I come home from a weekend surf tournament, she smells my
clothes for perfume. I even caught her going through my email a couple of times.”
“Look at that, boss. She’s suffocating him, and all he’s doing is taking lingerie shots of her
girlfriends,” Tony comments.
“It’s not what you think. I wasn’t sleeping with Tiffany.”
“Good. Then you won’t mind submitting a DNA sample,” I ask him.
“Why? Do you have the killer’s DNA? All right, fine. You know what? You want me to take a test,
I’ll take your test. I’ve got nothing to hide.”
“Why don’t I believe that?” I mumble under my breath.

“Ding-ding-ding- Ding-ding-ding! We have a winner! Tony, tell us what he’s won,” Abby happily
exclaims when the DNA comes back saying that Kevin is the victim’s unborn child’s father.
“Well, Abby, he’s won an all-expenses paid iron vacation to sunny Leavenworth,” Tony exclaims
while pretending to be a radio spokesperson.
“Keep your day job,” Kate informs Tony.
“May not be an option,” Gibbs informs them.
“What about the prints?” I ask Abby.
“I compared them to the prints that Tony and McGee got from the beach restroom. They didn’t jive,”
Abby informs us.
“We must’ve lifted hundreds of prints. You sure you ran them all?” McGee ask Abby.
“No, McGee. About midway through I got tired so I just said screw it.”
“Just thought I’d check.”
“Okay, so he didn’t leave any prints. All that proves is that he’s more careful at a crime scene than he
is in the bedroom,” Tony comments.

“I agrees to take a test. I didn’t agree to spend the while night in this tiny room,” Kevin complains in
interrogation room while I watch from observation room with Gibbs and McGee.
“This is a luxury suite compared to what you’re looking at,” Tony informs him.
“What are you talking about?”
“You lied to us, Kev.”
“I don’t know what you’re talking about. I didn’t lie to you about anything,” Kevin exclaims as Kate
leads Lisa into the observation room.
“What’s going on? What is Kevin still doing here?” Lisa ask us in confusion.
“Evidence leads us to believe he was involved in Tiffany’s murder,” Gibbs informs her.
“Oh, no. that’s ridiculous. He’s not capable of killing anyone.”
“I’ve got good news and I’ve got bad news. Which do you want to hear first? Tiffany was pregnant,
and there is a ninewty-nine-point0nine0eight percent probability that you are the father,” Tony
informs him.
“Tiff was pregnant?” Kevin ask him in surprise.
“I decided to go with the bad news.”
“I had no idea.”
“He cheated on me? I can’t believe he cheated on me. I’ve given him everything,” Lisa exclaims in
pain.
“You never suspected?” I ask her in surprise.
“Why would I? She’s my friend.”
“It’ll be okay,” Kate symphonically while patting Lisa’s shoulder trying to calm her down.
“Get her a class of water, McGee,” Gibbs orders McGee.
“You bet,” McGee says while getting Lisa water.
“I still don’t believe he killed her,” Lisa comments.
“I thought you said there was some good news,” Kevin says when Tony doesn’t tell him the good
“Right. I almost forgot. There is a point oh-two percent chance that you’re going to walk out of here,” Tony informs him happily.

“Look, I… I screwed up, okay? I admit that. But I am not a killer. The last time that I saw Tiff was right before we left and we both decided that we’d end it then.”

“You’re not a very reputable guy, Kev. Why should we believe you?”

“Because I’m telling you the truth!”

“If you don’t have anything to do with this, why’d you avoid us?”

“What are you talking about? I never avoided you.”

“We’ve been calling you for two days. I left four messages on your cell phone,” Tony overlaps Kevin while inform him.

“He’s lying! He never left him any messages!” Lisa exclaims in anger.

“How do you know?” I ask her making her realise we have worked it out and she is the suspect know.

“Sure you don’t want to call your lawyer?” Gibbs asks Lisa as we walk into her interrogation room now.

“I didn’t do anything wrong. I just want to get this over with,” Lisa informs us.

“It must’ve been a shock when you heard Tiffany’s message. No one would blame you for being angry,” I state while sitting across from her.

“I didn’t listen to any message, okay? I wouldn’t invade Kevin’s privacy like that.”

“You didn’t have any problem searching through his email,” Gibbs comments.

“He told you that?”

“We lifted your fingerprint from this glass. It matches a print we found a few feet from Tiffany’s body,” I inform her while lifting her drinking glass that is now in an evidence bag.

“I think I’d like to call my lawyer now.”

“I think that’s probably a good idea,” Gibbs agrees with her.

“I thought you were leaving,” Kate comments when Tony is still there when he is on holidays.

“I’m on my way. See you next week,” Tony promises while leaving.

“Try not to embarrass yourself, Tony.”

“Come on, Kate. I’m way too grown up for that.”

“No, why don’t I believe that?” I ask Kate once Tony has left.

“Because you know him,” Kate offers to me.

“Yeah, that’s probably it. Ready to go?”

“Yeah,” Kate agrees with me while we get our gear and leave together.

We arrive home to an over excited Ugly Tony the second who jumps all over us.

“Hello. And how was your day?” I ask my puppy while picking her up and carrying her back inside.

I check her water and food but they are both full so I don’t have fill them again.

“What you want to do tonight?” Kate asks me.

Sleep?”

“You tired. It’s only oh… Never mind it is after midnight.”

“Night,” I say to Kate while heading to bed with my dog tucked under my arm like a stuffed toy. I place Tony in my bed before grabbing my PJ which is a big man’s shirt (that I stole from Gibbs) and panties. I head into the bathroom where I have a shower and brush my teeth. I climb into bed and snuggle up to my rat-dog that I have fallen in love with.

I wake up the next morning to the sound of Kate’s off tone singing in the shower. I climb out of bed leaving Tony sleeping peacefully like I was before. I head to the kitchen where I put the coffee on to help wake me up and begin breakfast for us. I cook bacon and eggs with tost for both of us while placing the fatty tails in Tony’s bowl for her to eat.
“Mmm, smells good,” Kate comments while walking into the kitchen and looking over my shoulder at the food. “Thanks, I do try,” I inform her while handing her a plate and cup of coffee. “I know. You are a great cook, whoever you like would be lucky,” Kate teases me while we walk over to the table while sitting down across from each other. “You work out who it is yet?” “Abby thinks it is Mick.” “Who is Mick?” “Down in mail.” “Nope, I don’t even know him.” “What about Luke?” “In dispatch?” “Yes.” “The one with all the pimples and always blushes when he sees a female?” “Yes.” “He is creepy.” “I agree. I just thought I would offer encase it was him.” “You think so little of me?” “Nope, but I can think it for a moment” “No you can’t. Or I won’t cook for you ever again.” “What do you want to do today?” “I was thinking about cooking a cake or cookies. I have been craving homemade sweets.” “We can make both. I have nothing to do today.” “Cool.”

After making plans for the day, we finish breakfast in silence. Kate heads to the kitchen to do the washing up while I head back into my room to get dressed for the day. I put on an old pair of jeans with more holes in them than marital, an old T-shirt that I got from Kate when I was younger, I just can’t bring myself to throw it away yet. The shirt says, ‘Instant HUMAN Just add COFFEE’ and it is my favourite shirt, and Kate is a bitch who won’t tell me where she got it. “When are you going to get rid of that outfit? It has more wears than Tony has date,” Kate complains as I walk out with Ugly Tony the Second following me. “When you buy me a new shirt,” I ask her while grabbing the cake mix and grabbing what we need out of the cupboards and fridge to make it. “I’m not telling you where I got it, because then it will be the only thing you wear,” Kate informs me while grabbing the bowl and spoon to mix the cake. She also preheats the oven for me, and oils the tray so that the cake will come out easily. I decide on a double chocolate cake without icing because I like it that way. I begin adding the ingredients into the bowl while Kate begins mixing it for me. We cook without cooking because we often cook together, not as often as we should but still often. Kate tips the mixed cake into the cake tin, while I lick the spoon clean. Once the cake is put in the oven Kate helps me lick the bowl clean before we start on the cookies. I love raw cake mix, maybe even more than the real cooked cake. I realise that I have to go to the shop to get more coffee, cookie mix and something for dinner. “Kate do you want to come to the shops with me?” I call out to Kate while making the list of stuff we need, but not right now like ice-cream and toothpaste. “No, I will stay home and take the cake out when it is cooked.” “Do not eat it.” “Our cake.” “Don’t eat it,” I exclaim while pointing my finger at her. “I won’t eat out cake,” she promises me while holding her hands up innocently. “I don’t believe you,” I mumble while I leave the apartment. I walk down to the curb and I call a cab to take me home.
I get to the shop and begin collecting the items on my list and when I get to the last item on my list is cereal but Kate never told me what type she wanted. I walk into the aisle where I see Gibbs, or who I think is him from the back, also looking at cereal.

“Jethro,” a red head calls from the other side of the aisle making Gibbs, or who I think is Gibbs, tense up.

“Lily,” Gibbs says tensely while turning to her.

“How have you been?”

“Busy.”

“When are we going to date again?” Lily, the redhead, ask Gibbs making him tense even more, making him look like a wooden board. He hesitates on answering her, he slowly begins answering her but my tire on the trolley squeaks making them look at me and he gets a look on his handsome face that tells me he has a plan and I problem wont enjoy it, or enjoy it too much.

“Alice, baby there you are,” Gibbs exclaims while walking over to me.

“Gibbs,” I great him in confusion.

“Got everything you needed?”

“Um, I think so,” I answer him while looking at the items in my trolley and the list in my other hands.

“Jethro,” Lily exclaims in a headache inducing screech.

“Um, oh right. Lily this is Alice,” Gibbs introduces us without telling her who I am.

“Hey, are you his daughter?”

“Are you a prostate? I know someone who would be willing to pay,” I say to her making her glare at me.

“Bitch.”

“You ready to go?” Gibbs ask me while placing a kiss on my forehead.

“Yeah. You got what you need?” I ask him but Lily is still glaring at us.

“Yep,” He answer me before whispering in my ear, “Quick, kiss me.”

“Why?” I whisper back in confusion.

“Because if you don’t, Lily with think I am single.”

“Aren’t you?”

“I am, that is beside the point. She is so self-centred. Now kiss me and that’s an order,” Gibbs orders me before planting a kiss on my lips. At first the kiss was soft but after a moment it becomes heated for a little while until Lily screeches in anger before storming off.

“What was that about?” I ask Gibbs when he stops kissing him with his smirk on his face.

“What?”

“Gibbs, you know what I’m talking about.”

“Oh. I really didn’t want to go on a second date with her.”

“Why? She seems nice.”

“We were on an hour long date, and all we talked about is her life.”

“She sounds lovely.” I say sarcastically while grabbing a box of Weet-Bix for Kate to eat.

“Yeah, I was so glade when we got a case.”

“I would have climbed out a bathroom window. It’s not that head to fit through them.”

“How many times have you climbed out a window?”

“Often enough to know that you always land on you head, or at least I do. So why did you kiss me? There is other way to get her to leave you alone,” I ask him while joining a line to check out of the shop.

“It worked.”

“But why?”

“Because I wanted to,” Gibbs informs me while helping me put up my groceries up on the counter with his cereal as well.

“That totally make sense,” I say sarcastically.

“That'll be $57.25” the cashier informs us.

“Here you go,” I say while handing her sixty dollars.
“Your changes is two dollars and seventy-five cents.”
“Thanks,” I say to the cashier while taking my groceries out to the corner to get a cab but Gibbs just carries half my groceries to his car making me just walk over to his car for a list. Gibbs drives to my apartment without us talking but all I can think is ‘Gibbs kissed me. Gibbs kissed me.’

Once we arrived at the apartment we both get out of the car and Gibbs helps me carry the groceries up to our apartment. I open the door before we walk in to see Kate dancing and singing into the TV remote, and she can’t sing.

“What are you doing?” I ask Kate making her jump.
“Alice your back,” Kate exclaims before turning around but froze when she sees Gibbs who is behind me with both arms full of food. She quickly adds, “Gibbs.”

“Kate,” Gibbs nods at her before moving to the kitchen to put the food down. Kate gives me a look that says ‘why didn’t you tell me that he was here?’
“What? I just got back,” I whisper to her while we follow Gibbs into the kitchen. Once I put the groceries down. Kate and I begin putting the groceries away, all but the stuff to make cookies. I still want to make cookie. I turn to Gibbs and ask him, “Do you want so fresh cake?”
“I’m fine,” Gibbs answers me.
“Come on, it’s good.” I inform him while cutting him a piece even knowing he said he didn’t want it. I place it on a paper plate and shove it out Gibbs making him take it, I then cut Kate and myself a piece.

“Thanks,” Gibbs says while taking a small bite only to look momentarily surprised about how good it is.
“IT’s ok,” Kate say when she takes her bite.
“Of cause it’s only ok. You helped make it,” I say to Kate with a grin.

After the cake, Gibbs leaves leaving Kate and myself to cook the cookies.

“Hey Kate. Can I talk to you about something, but you have to promise that you won’t freak out or tell anyone. Or get mad,” I say to Gibbs.

“Sure. What is it?” Kate agrees with me while trying some of the cookie dough.

“Promise.”
“Okay, I promise.”
“I… at the…. At the grocery story, Gibbs kissed me;” I whisper it hoping it doesn’t sound to bad to my overprotective sister.

“He What?”

“Kate. Please, I need help with something.”

“What can you possibly need help with? He kissed you, he shouldn’t have,” Kate screeches at me.

“Kate please.”

“Fine talk to me.”

“I, um, I liked it. A lot. Does that make me a bad person?” I ask Kate while leaning against the kitchen bench, I am standing but making myself look as small as possible. Something I haven’t done since I spent the night with Ari and before that it was when every time I saw Kate’s parents.

“Why would that make you a bad person?” Kate ask while turning to me and leaving the cookie dough for the moment. She knows that I when I stand like this I am really scared and am just a lost child that she took in years earlier.

“He only kissed me because he didn’t want to go on a date with some women he went on one date with.”

“Yeah. See this is why I am a bad person. I enjoyed something that he did only because I was the only on there beside the women,” I whimper to Kate.

“No. Come on, tell me what you have going on through that head,” Kate whispers to me while giving me a hug.

“I like him, I really like him. And he only kissed me to get out of a date;” I whisper into Kate’s
shoulder.
“We’ll work this out. We always do,” Kate promises while rubbing my back. Once I calm down a little bit she says, “Now go wash you face and we’ll finish cooking these cookies.”
“Okay,” I node to Kate while heading into the bathroom to clean myself up.
Once I return we cook and Kate talks to me about everything about everything but that I admitted that I liked Gibbs.
As Kate puts the cookies in the oven and then turn to me.
“Let’s call Abby and have a girls’ night,” Kate says to me while picking the phone up to do just that.
“That sounds like a good idea,” I agree with her.
“Hey guys,” Abby says happily like normal.
“Hey Abby,” I say to her.
“Hey Abby,” Kate says happily before turning to her from her spot at the chair that is facing away from the door. She waits for Abby to sit next to me on the coach before she begins again, “Alice has a crush and we need your help with working out what to do.”
“Who does she has a crush on?” Abby ask.
“Kate,” I hiss at her but she doesn’t listen to me.
“Gibbs,” Kate answers.
“I know it,” Abby exclaims while bouncing on the spot making me give her a look in surprise. She know?
“What?” Kate and I ask her in confusion.
“It was so obviate that she likes him.”
“Does everyone know?” I ask her in fear.
“Nope,” Abby answers me before adding, “So who is making the plan? We have got to make Gibbs admit he likes you back. Maybe you should make him jealous.”
“You think he likes me back?”
“This could end badly for everyone. Especially for me and McGee without Tony there to take the blunt of his temper,” Kate exclaims.
“Don’t worry, I have a plan,” Abby promises us.
Conspiracy Theory

Chapter Notes

For anyone who is curious why I am posting this weekend and not last, it is because I was at the Winton Way Out West Fest (Queensland Australia). It was an great weekend, if you went did you have fun. But if this chapter isn't as good as normal because I didn't have as much time as normal to write it.

“Thirteen, fifteen, seventeen… nineteen,” Tony counts while doing push-up behind his desk while we walk into the squad room.
“Did you lose something down there, DiNozzo?” Kate ask while I laugh at him.
“Ninety nine, a hundred, just doing mu morning exercise.”
“Right. So how old’s this one?” I ask him while sitting down at Gibbs desk and placing both coffee cups down on the desk before starting up the computer.
“Why does it always have to be another woman, Alice?” Tony ask me innocently.
“Uh, because we’re talking about you?” Kate ask him.
“Get your favourite here. Bacon-sausage-cheese breakfast burrito,” McGee exclaim while carrying in breakfast for Tony.
“I’ll pass. Too much fat,” Tony say to him making McGee freeze in confusion, Tony not eating fatting food. That’s never happened before.
“She must be really young,” Kate comments.
“Here,” I call to McGee while holding my hand out for Tony’s food.
“Uh, because we’re talking about you?” Kate ask him.
“Get your favourite here. Bacon-sausage-cheese breakfast burrito,” McGee exclaim while carrying in breakfast for Tony.
“I’ll pass. Too much fat,” Tony say to him making McGee freeze in confusion, Tony not eating fatting food. That’s never happened before.
“She must be really young,” Kate comments.
“Here,” I call to McGee while holding my hand out for Tony’s food.
“Oh, she is,” Abby informs us while walking into the squad room.
“I don’t think they need to know about her, Abs,” Tony complains to Abby in the hopes of stopping Abby letting the cat out of the bag.
“She’s five ten, black hair, long legs and ginormous headlights.”
“That last part really necessary?”
“That is what you called them. She broke down by the navy yard last night, and Tony helped her out.”
“Oh, I bet he did,” Kate and I mumble together.
“She’s a junior at Georgetown.”
“Hmm. So that would make her what, about twenty?” Kate ask Tony.
“Actually, she could be younger. I was eighteen when I was a junior at MIT,” McGee informs Kate.
“When we need clarification, we’ll ask for it, Probie. Thank you,” Tony snaps at McGee.
“Oh, I’m asking. How old, Abs?” I ask Abby while leaning back in Gibbs chair.
“Well, she was old enough to turn Tony down. Said she only goes out with guys in their twenties,” Abby informs us.
“Oh, poor baby,” Kate coos to Tony.
“She wasn’t my type anyway,” Tony admits, but he is lieing, he was so interested.
“Well, that’s a good thing because I think it’s time that the ‘sex machine’ hung his spurs up,” Kate teases Tony.
“How do you know that?” Tony hisses at Kate while I return to work.
“Your college nickname? Let’s just say that dating your frat brother has its advantages.”
“Grab your gear. We’re going to Georgetown. Petty officer was assaulted in her home last night. You’re driving… sex machine,” Gibbs orders us while grabbing his gear and cup of coffee that I
brought. I follow Gibbs while laughing at Tony, Tony quickly does something on his computer making Kate’s computer beep.

“Tony! Tony, come on. We can work this out.” Kate hisses at Tony as they enter the elevator with us. Tony just grins at he making me give them a look but ii don’t comment because I really don’t want to know.

“Name’s petty officer Jessica Smith, claims intruder in military fatigues entered her home and tried to attack her,” Taylor the local officer reports to us in disbelieve as we stand around in the almost victim apartment.

“What do you mean, tried?” Gibbs ask him in confusion.

“At this point? I’m not even sure there was an attacker.”

“Who are you?” Smith as us as we walk into her bed room.

“Special Agent Gibbs, Todd and probationary agent Todd, NCIS,” Gibbs informs her.

“We have to talk, but not here. They’re listening,” Smith whispers to us.

“Who’s listening? Petty officer?” Kate ask her in confusion.

“I wish I knew.”

“Turn the radio on,” Gibbs orders me, I turn on the radio to a random channel, “There. They can’t hear us now. Tell me about last night.”

“How… how do I know I can trust you?”

“Because we’re here to help,” I softly tell her while moving closer to her in case she begins crying.

“I heard voice… whispering.”

“Saying what?” Gibbs ask her.

“I couldn’t tell, but it was about me. You have to protect me.”

“From what?” I ask her softly.

“Monsters,” Smith answer me as the door opens in surprise.

“Jessica? It’s going to be okay,” Witten, a random man, says while walking into the apartment room.

“Boss, the commander refused to wait outside,” Tony exclaims while entering the bedroom, making the room very cowed with all the people in it.

“Lieutenant Commander Allan Witten. I’m petty officer Smith’s psychologist.”


“Very well.”

“I don’t want to of back. I can’t go back. Please don’t make me go back,” Smith cries making me reacted by pulling her into a hug. I gently rub her back in the hopes of caring the terrified women down.

“It’ll be okay. Everything is going to be fine,” I promise her before leaving the room once she has calmed down.

“Jessica is under my care. When she missed her phone session this morning, I became concerned,” Witten is saying when I walk out.

“What’s wrong with her?” Tony ask him rudely.

“Tony,” I hiss at him in disgust. “You can’t ask that.”

“She’s been diagnosed with Brief Reactive Psychosis. We believe it’s been triggered by the death of her fiancé in Iraq last month,” Witten answers Tony while ignoring me.

“Yeah? Why isn’t she in the hospital?” Gibbs ask him.

“As her condition improved, we released her, treated her as an outpatient.”

“She told the cops there was a man in her bedroom in camouflage utilities and body armour,” Tony informs the shrink.

“Was she hearing voices and did he have a knife?”

“How do you know that, commander?” I demand of him in suspiration and concerned for the petty officer, she is like a scared child.

“It’s a delusion, agent Todd. She’s had several just like it at Bethesda. I need to get her back. Gentlemen, I assure you, no crime has been committed here.”

“Why don’t you let me decide that?” Gibbs ask her.
“I don’t like him,” I sign to Gibbs while throwing a glare at the shrink, I hope nothing happens to the petty officer is going to be safe and okay.

“The petty officer Smith say anything while I was talking to her shrink?” Gibbs ask Kate as we arrive at the truck to see Tony teasing Kate about something again.

“No, all she kept telling me was to call her CO, and let him know that the monsters are after her again. From all appearances, I’d say she had a relapse,” Kate reports.

“Well, my first two marriages were based on appearances. Pull petty officer Smith’s records when we get back,” Gibbs orders us while we get into the truck and Gibbs takes off.

“Navy Achievement Medal winner. Sailor of the Quarter three times. She is an outstanding sailor, Gibbs,” Kate reports back in the squad room while Gibbs sits at his desk while I sit on the ledge behind his desk.

“Lot of overachievers and perfectionists lose it. My uncle ran a Fortune five hundred company until they found him digging up holes in a golf course looking for mole people. You’re a perfectionist, aren’t you, Kate?” Tony asks Kate.

“Before her breakdown, she was working for the department of Acquisitions at the Pentagon,” McGee reports while Kate glares at Tony.

“Who was her C.O?” Gibbs asks them.

“Captain Ross Vetter. There’s an open case file on him, boss,” Tony reports.

“Why don’t I know about it?”

“It’s not ours. It’s the FBI’s. They opened it about a month before Smith had her psychotic break.”

“What are they investigating Vetter for?” I ask them in confusion.

“I can’t tell… they’re not letting NCIS access the contents of the file.”

“McGee!” Gibbs yells.

“You want the FBI’s case file on Captain Vetter. On it!” McGee exclaims.

“Can’t you call your dog, I’m sure he would know,” I whisper into Gibbs ear making him laugh quietly.

“Let’s roll,” Gibbs orders us.

“Where to?” Tony asks in confusion, as we grab our gear.

“To ask Petty Officer Smith some questions about monsters.”

“Hi, I’m Catherine Reynolds. We’ve been expecting you. Welcome to Seven West. Commander Witten is on his way down here,” Reynolds exclaims as we walk up to her in the crazy hospital.

“I can tell you everything there is to know about this place,” William, one of the insane people, cuts in.

“They don’t need to know anything, William.”

“All you have to do is ask me. Who’s got the power? Who’s cool? Who’s got the baby oil?” W

“That’s enough, William. Go back to group. Oh, there’s commander Witten now.”

“Kate, Alice, you’re with me,” Gibbs orders us.

“Uh… boss? What about me?” Tony asks in confusion as we walk away without anyone answering him but Kate gives him a proud look.

“She’s being sedated. She’ll sleep through the night,” Witten informs us as we walk through the corridor.

“They don’t need to know anything, William.”

“I want to talk to her when she wakes up,” Gibbs orders him.

“Absolutely not. She’s paranoid of authority figures.”

“From what I’ve seen, the only one she seems paranoid about is you,” I state while staring at the shrink.

“She had a delusional episode. This has nothing to do with NCIS. You can check back in a few weeks.”

“We’ll see you tomorrow,” Gibbs informs him.

“I have a degree in clinical psychology. Do you have any expertise in the area, agent Gibbs?”
“No, no, I do not. Just a B.S. meter. See you in the morning, doc,” Gibbs informs him before we leave the crazy hospital for the day.

The FBI is stonewalling us, boss. They claim that the captain Vetter case is classified,” McGee reports when we return to the squad room that night.

“Last time I checked we had clearance, Probie,” Tony states to McGee.

“Well, they’re still not releasing the info, Tony, but I did call the Pentagon and I spoke with the Admiral in charge of his office. The FBI thinks that Captain Vetter was taking kickbacks in exchange for government contracts. He’s on administrative leave, pending the outcome of the investigation…”

“They say anything about Petty Officer Jessica Smith?” I cut McGee off.

“Yes, she was questioned, but so was everybody else in Vetter’s group.”

“Well, if she was found mentally ill, it would excuse her from testifying against her boss,” Kate comments.

“She didn’t look like she was faking it to me,” Tony comments.

“Something tells me you say that a lot.”

“Kate, when they pour cold water over your chest, doesn’t that sort of make you…”

“Hey, DiNozzo! If you do that again, I will put my boot so far up your ass,” Gibbs cuts Tony out who is teasing my sister with a full body shake. I glare at Tony because no one but I am allowed to tease Kate, she is my squeaky toy.

Gibbs phone begins ringing before he can finish his threat to Tony, “Yeah, Gibbs… Yeah. Yeah, I’m listening… yeah, all right. We’re on our way… Jessica, stay on the phone with me,” When Gibbs says to this I jump to attention, what is happening to our almost-victim-crazy-person. Gibbs continues speaking while grabbing his gear to leave, “You just keep talking to me, Jessica,” After a moment he closes the phone because she hang up on him.

“IS Jessica okay?” I demand of Gibbs while we get to the elevator to leave for the hospital.

“Jessica Smith’s room?” I demand of the person behind the reception desk.

“Ma’am, I’m not authorized. Commander Witten told me under no,” Morgan, the person, attempts to inform us but Gibbs bashes on the glass window to shut him up.

“Open her door or I’ll break it down!” Gibbs shouts at him. The man nods and leads us to Jessica’s room and opens the door. When the door opens I gasp in surprise when the door opens to see that Jessica is hanging off her bed that is standing on the foot giving it the height needed for someone – Jessica – to hang themselves.

“Jessica,” I whisper in sadness, she was so nice but also very scared of the world.

“Find out who else she called. Check out her speed dial and phonebook,” Gibbs orders McGee while handing McGee the phone she used to ring Gibbs.

“On it,” McGee agrees while taking the phone to do what he is ordered.

“She should have been observed twenty four hours a day, Jethro. A young, troubled girl like this being left alone all night is negligent at best!” Ducky exclaim while looking over our poor victim.

“My god! Did she leave a note?” Gibbs ask him.

“No. if she did, what would she have written?” Gibbs ask him.

“And with what would she use to write? Her blood? Oh, wait she’s not bleeding,” I hiss at the shrink in anger, he let her kill herself.

“I don’t know,” Witten exclaims before leaving again.

“He was the one responsible for the Petty Officer?” Ducky ask Gibbs.

“Easy, Duck,” Gibbs orders him.

“Yes,” I answer Ducky while glaring after the shrink.

“Commander. How could you have allowed this young woman to be left alone all night?” Ducky demands of the shrink.

“There was a corpsman on duty,” Witten defends himself.

“One corpsman for an entire ward?” I snap at him in anger.

“We had seven patients. None were considered suicide risks.”
“I’m sure their family will take great solace from that,” Ducky snaps at the shrink next.
“She’s ready, Doctor Mallard,” Jimmy calls out to us while sticking his head out the door.
“Well, let’s get her home, mister palmer.”

“Where no one can hurt her. But it is a bit late for that,” I comment while following her. Once we are out of hearing range of the shrink I comment to Ducky, “I don’t like him. He might has well killed her with his own two hands.”

As we enter the hospital room as Tony leaves to get someone to collect all the patience’s to talk to, see if any of them that they might know.

“Really, really hard, Agent Tony,” Reynolds, the nurse from earlier, who turned out to be a patience, say to Tony as Gibbs and I walk up behind them.

“If you’re not too busy, DiNozzo,” Gibbs calls out making them turn to us.

“You’re a shy little thing. Yeesh!” Tony comments whine Reynolds grabs his ass.

“I didn’t hear anything, sir,” Morgan defends himself at the nurses’ station.

“Is this where you were most of the night?” Gibbs demands of him.

“Unless I was making my rounds.”

“When’s the last time you checked on Petty Officer Smith?” Kate ask him next.

“Nineteen thirty, ma’am. She was sedated and sleeping peacefully.”

“If she was sedated, how did she manage to call us?” Tony ask him.

“And hang herself?” Kate adds.

“Ma’am, I’ve seen patients kill themselves by stuffing their noses and throats full of toilet paper. If they want to do it, they find a way,” Morgan informs us.

“Where they on suicide watch or did Witten not think it was important?” I demands of the nurse.

“Or they’re helped. Who classified her a non-suicide risk?” Gibbs ask while placing his hand on my back because I’m ready to kill this inconsiderate asshole, a young lady just died and he doesn’t care, and didn’t hear anything.

“Commander Witten, sir,” Morgan informs us making my anger spike even more.

“All right, that’s all for now.”

“Yes, dir.”

“Boss, finished processing her room. Okay to tape it off now?” McGee ask while walking up to us.

“Yeah. Go ahead. Do it. I also want everything on Witten and every contact he’s had with Petty Officer Smith,” Gibbs orders McGee.

“Tonight?” McGee ask but Gibbs just give him the look that says, yes tonight so McGee adds, “Oh, I’ll get right on it. What about doctor/patient confidentiality?”

“It doesn’t exist in the military anymore, Probie. And sadly for some, it doesn’t exist between NCIS teammates either,” Tony states.

“You’re wasting your time. It doesn’t bother me anymore, Tony,” Kate informs Tony happily.

“Probie, want to see something hot?”

“Sure,” McGee exclaim excitedly because Tony never includes him in nothing.

“What’s it going to cost me?” Kate hiss at Tony stopping him from showing McGee.

“I don’t know. Do you still have that Catholic schoolgirl uniform?” Tony ask Kate making me pull a disgusted face as I quickly turn and walk away in disgust, I don’t need to hear that.

“I wasn’t supposed to be dead?” Kate ask as we walk into the squad room to see Fornell sitting in Gibbs desk chair the morning after Jessica killed herself.

“Got better,” Tony answers her.

“Does Gibbs know he’s sitting at this desk?” Kate ask as I walk over to the desk and place on of the coffee cups on the table.

“No.”

“Oh, this is going to be…”

“Great!”

“Comfortable?” Gibbs ask Fornell.
“Not really. There’s no lumber support. And you should get a password to protect your computer,” Fornell says to Gibbs.

“That’s what this is for. What do you want, Tobias?” Gibbs ask Fornell while placing his gun in the top draw of his desk.

“Hey, Gibbs. I don’t know it was bring we’re allowed to bring our dogs to work, if I did I would have brought Ugly Tony the Second for your dog to play with,” I comment making Fornell glare at me.

“It’s not. He just followed me.”

“I can use that excuse.”

“I’m not his dog,” Fornell exclaims.

“Yes you are. Why else would he see you?”

“Because I am the man screwing his ex-wife.”

“You’re married to her right?”

“Yeah.”

“Then you’re not screwing her. Because married people don’t have sex. That’s why they get married because they fail to get it up,” I explain to Fornell like he is an idiot.

“Is she serious?” Fornell ask everyone.

“Yes. She’s had that view her whole life,” Kate explains to him.

“Which is why it is so surprising that Kate and Tony aren’t married,” I add making them glare at me, “What?”

“What do you want, Tobias?” Gibbs ask Fornell again when we stop talking for a moment.

“I’m hurt! Can’t an old friend just stop by and say hi?” Fornell ask him innocently.

“Well, you are old. I’ll give you that.”

“Our usual conference room?”

“Lead the way,” Gibbs orders me and once Fornell walks off he orders McGee, “Hey, you make sure he didn’t do any of that virus goat rope crap to my… my thing.”

“Goat rope?” McGee ask in confusion.

“Marine term, Probie,” Tony explains without explaining.

“Her means half way between Fubar and Snafu,” Kate explains for him.

“Okay. What’s a Fubar,” McGee ask next.

“You are,” We all exclaim together as McGee sits in Gibbs desk chair to check over Gibbs computer.

“Hey, McGee!” Gibbs calls as he leave the elevator he was talking to Fornell in.

“Boss!” McGee ask him while sitting up like an excited puppy.

“Get me the home address of Captain Ross Vetter. And get the sedan.”

“Where’d the dog go?” I ask Gibbs while looking around for Fornell.

“Looking for the information the FBI has on Vetter,” Gibbs whispers to me making me tense up because I can’t help thinking about the kiss over the weekend.

“Why would he do that?”

“Because he likes me.”

“Why don’t I believe that?”

We arrive at Captain Vetter’s home and I ring the doorbell as Gibbs and McGee stands behind me as we wait. He opens the door and doesn’t seem happy to see us, but no one ever does.

“What do you want?” Vetter snaps at us.

“To hear you side of the story,” I begin.

“Off the record,” Gibbs promises him as we enter the house.

“I’m being railroaded,” Vetter informs to us as we walk into the living room where Gibbs and McGee end up having to sit on the love seat making Gibbs glare at McGee to give him more room. I sit on the arm of the love seat next to Gibbs.

“By who?” I ask him in confusion.

“The military industrial complex. I wouldn’t play their game.”
“That kind of game is that, Captain?” Gibbs asks him.
“Do you know how defense contracts are decided in this country?”
“Usually by the lowest bidder.”
“Every Senator, every Congressman, tries to grab a piece of their own people.”
“For their state?” McGee asks in confusion.
“No, the people. The corporations that fund their campaigns. And then hire them after they get out of office, Agent McGee.”
“Do you think that’s why the FBI is investigating you?” I ask him.
“I know it! I was trying to change that system and now I’m paying for it,” Vetter explains before knocking over his drink. He calls out then, “Damn it! Sweetheart? Audrey? We need some towels out here.”
“Kind of early for the single malt, isn’t it, Skipper?” Gibbs asks him.
“You have no idea what the last couple of months have been like for me, for my family.”
“No, I don’t. But you don’t know what it’s been like for Petty Officer Smith,” I remind him.
“I’ve been meaning to visit her.”
“A little late for that,” Gibbs states.
“Jessica Smith killed herself last night, Captain,” McGee informs him.
“I knew she was having some issues when her fiancé died but… do you know why?” Vetter asks us.
“That’s what we’re hoping to find out.”
“When are you people going to leave us alone?” Audrey, the captain’s wife, snaps at us.
“It’s all right, sweetheart. They’re NCIS agents,” Vetter defends us, which is a nice change.
“I don’t care, Ross. I’m not answering anymore questions. I want them out of my home.”
“I’m sorry to hear about Jessica. She was like a daughter to me. I should have been there for her.”
“She wanted us to pass a message on to you, Captain,” I inform him.
“The monsters were after her again,” McGee informs him.
“We don’t wither… yet. If you think of anything that might help, call me,” Gibbs orders him while handing over one of his business cards.
“Of course.”
“Sorry to bother you, ma’am. You have a very beautiful home,” I say to Audrey.
“When I was a Marine, I could have never afforded a place as nice as this,” Gibbs comments before we leave the house.

“See what?” Gibbs explains while walking into the garage to see Tony and Kate at it again while looking at a blow up sex doll dressed in Abby’s clothes laying on the bed used to hang the victim’s body.
“Nothing, boss. I’m just admiring Abby’s handiwork,” Tony exclaims happily.
“Why?” I ask Abby while looking at the clothed doll.
“Well, I was bored and I thought she needed a little personality,” Abby defends herself.
“Does she have a purpose, Abby?” Gibbs demands of her.
“Several, in fact, according to her instruction manual.”
“Did you borrow that from Tony? Because if you did, you might not want to wear those cloth again and sterilise the doll before you touch it,” I comment making Tony glare at me and Abby grin.
“For the case, Abs,” Gibbs orders her.
“Oh, right. Um… I think I know how Petty Officer Smith was strung up. According to her hospital chart, she was given fifteen milligrams of Trazodone when she arrived at Bethesda. That’s enough to zonk her out for most of the day,” Abby explains happily.

“Then how did she make the phone call asking us for help?” Kate asks her in confusion.

“Well, it would have started to wear off. She would have been weak, sluggish. At least enough for this,” Abby explains before pretending to smother her blow up doll with the pillow.

“Except there were no signs of a struggle, Abby,” Tony reminds her.

“Have you ever been on Trazodone, Tony? I mean, she could have fought off a ten year old. But still there is a problem.”

“How’d they hang her afterwards?” Gibbs asks in confusion and anger because someone was able to kill the young lady and no one seems to care.

“Correct as always, my silver-haired fox. I mean Gibbs-Sir-Boss. See what’s missing?” Abby happily answers while accidentally calling him by a nickname.

“Nothing to stand on,” Tony answers her after looking around.

“Exactly. How did the killer lift her body afterwards?”

“There were two of them?” Kate offers to her.

“Possible. But there’s a simpler way. The legs of the bed act as a fulcrum,” Abby explains before demonstrating by standing the bed up, which makes a loud noise that would carry through the whole hospital. She then informs us, “Making it easy for one person to lift Jessica’s weight.”

“That would have make some noise,” Tony says what we are all thinking.

“Enough that you probably would have heard it at the nurses’ station,” Kate agrees with Tony.

“Manned by Corpsman Morgen,” I comment in distaste.

“Have him report to NCIS tomorrow. Don’t tell him why!” Gibbs orders then.

“Saw what?” Tony asks her while shaking his phone at her.

“Nothing. I saw nothing.”

“I see nothing! I hear nothing! I know nothing!” I say while impersonating one of my favourite people growing up. (And if you can guess who, you are brilliant. I hope you can, but it is okay if you can’t because it is an older show.) making Kate glare at me because I am insulting her again.

“Book-on-tape club?” Tony asks as he walks into the squad room to see Kate reading a thick group of papers while McGee and I listen to sessions from of victim throw headphones the next morning after we were allowed to go home last night which surprise me because we always work through the night when we have a case.

“Jessica Smith’s therapy sessions,” Kate answers him while I take a note from the session I am listening to.

“Anything interesting?”

“Not with her psychologist, commander Witten. She’s evasive, afraid to talk.”

“She’s a little more outgoing in the group sessions, but not by much,” McGee informs them.

“Is her friend Catherine Reynolds on those tapes, probie?” Tony asks her.

“Yes. Ms Catherine Reynolds… she is the one that talks about sex a lot. It get kind of graphic.”

“Oh, okay. I’m going to need to listen to those and probably take them home.”

“Tony! What is wrong with you?” Kate hisses at Tony but he just reaches for his phone making her add, “Um… burn him a copy, McGee.”

“No don’t. These people are sick and injured and don’t know what is going on and what is appropriate or not and need protecting, not being exploited for sex. That is wrong and disgust. Not even the FBI would do that,” I yell at Tony is disgust, I hold my tongue on what he is doing to my sister and what he normally does. But I can’t do it for this, this is something I am very touchy about because I have a friend who has brain damage from being in the marines and getting injured. I have seen people like his wife and family to exploit him without caring that he need protecting.

“What I was going to say, if the petty officer was afraid to talk in public, she might be talking in private,” Tony defends himself.
“Well then you don’t need to take it home. You can listen right here like everyone else.”
“She may have opened up to some of her friends inside the ward? It’s a good idea,” McGee agrees with Tony while ignoring me.
“It’s a well-known fact, Mister McGee, that women tell each other everything,” Tony informs McGee.
“That would explain why none of my friends will go out with you,” Kate says to Tony.
“I’m sorry. Say something?”
“Nothing.”
“Agent DiNozzo?” Morgan, the nurses from the night that was on duty who didn’t hear Jessica get killed, ask Tony while walking in.
“Yeah,” Tony says while turning to him.
“I was told to report to you this morning.”
“Not to me, petty officer. To him,” Tony corrects him while pointing to Gibbs who is walking into the squad room with his ever present coffee cup in his right hand. One day he will die and I bet the ME won’t be able to remove it and he while be buried holding the coffee cup, and never spill a drop.
“Am I in trouble?” Morgan asks Gibbs from his spot in integration while we watch from observation room like normal.
“On what, sir?”
“You told us you were at the front desk your entire watch.”
“Except for when I when I was making rounds, sir.”
“How long do the rounds take?”
“A few minutes.”
“A few minutes? Okay, I got that. Did you see anyone else come in or out of the exit of the ward that night?”
“No, sir.”
“What about hearing anything unusual?”
“No, nothing… until you showed up, sir.”
“Yep. We’ve got a us a problem, petty officer.”
“Sir?”
Jessica Smith was murdered last night.”
“Murdered?”
“And according to you… you’re the only one that could have done it.”
“There’s no way he did it. Look at his reaction,” Kate comments.
“Maybe he’s just a good actor,” Tony corrects him.
“Nobody’s that good,” I comment.
“I’ve been thinking, Kate, about the photo… I’m sorry. I mean, you know I’d never give it out, right? In fact, I’m going to delete it right now.”
“Really?” Kate asks him excited.
“Mm-hmm,” Tony says while pulling out his phone and typing away on it.
“Thank you, Tony. That would be a huge relief. What are you doing?” Kate exclaims before Tony puts the phone away without doing it, so she freaks out again.
“Acting, Kate. It’s not that hard.”
“Not the only thing not that hard,” I comment making Tony glare at me before I ask him, “If you are looking at Kate wet t-shirt picture and not get a boner. Are you gay? I am beginning to think you are gay, or married.”
“I… I lied, sir,” Morgan says to Gibbs while Tony glares harder at me.
“Yeah. Yeah, I kind of figured that out for myself, petty officer,” Gibbs comments carefree.
“I screwed up, sir. I really screwed up.”
“I kind of figured that one out, too.”
“I left my post for about forty minutes. I was… with someone.”
“Does this person have a name?”
“One of the… patients, sir. Catherine Reynolds.”
“Doing what?”
“We’ve been having sex for three months now.”
“Sick bastard. All of you,” I exclaims before storming out of the observation and accidentally slamming my body into Gibbs as he leave integration.
“Alice, you alright?” Gibbs ask me while holding me to his body so I can’t storm away.
“Why are mean brain dead fuckwits?”
“Amy I missing something?”
“She needs protecting, not being fucked. She needs protecting,” I mumble the last bit because I feel bad for her, what happens when she is cured she will feel violated and no one cares.
“And she will be. Come on,” Gibbs promises me before leading me to the squad room.
“Kate, Alice, you’re with me. McGee! McGee!” Gibbs calls to McGee but McGee failed to hear him because he is still wearing the headphones. Gibbs walks over behind McGee and flicks the headphones off making McGee jump before he exclaims, “What the hell are you doing?”
“I’m listening to petty officer Smith’s group therapy sessions. There are two people that she interacts with the most, Catherine Reynolds and Lynn Simons. They’ve got a lot in common: knitting, crosswords puzzles, the TV show Quantum,” McGee rambles.
“McGee!” I cut him off because his rambling his giving me a headache.
“But I think they may be friends.”
“Why does that matter?” Gibbs demands of McGee.
“Well, she may have confided in them, told them something that she didn’t tell anybody else.”
“Good thinking, McGee.”
“I’m the one who came,” Tony begins but no one cares.
“Tony! Go babysit our corpsman in interrogation. McGee, you interview Reynolds and Simons,” Gibbs cuts Tony off to order everyone before we leave to the elevator to where ever Gibbs wants us to do with him.
“Where are we going?” Kate ask Gibbs once the door have closed.
“Jessica Smith’s house. I think she was telling the truth about someone being in her bedroom.”
“And we kill them?” I ask him but he just gives me a look that says ‘maybe.’
We arrive at Jessica’s house and walk up to the front door but someone shoots at us.
“Down!” Gibbs orders while we all duck down and Gibbs places his arm over my head to protect me. He asks us, “Are you okay?”
“Yeah,” Kate answers him but Gibbs turns to me without moving his arm yet.
“I’m okay,” I answer him.
“Let’s get this bastard,” Gibbs says before throwing the door open. We search the house with our guns drawn down, we open the door to hear an engine starts. The driver shots out our car tyres so we can’t follow him. Gibbs demands of us, “Did you get a plate?”
“No!” Kate and I answer in unison.
“Go damn it!”
“What do you think they were looking for?” Kate ask us as we return to the house and into the bedroom where this case began. We search the entire room and Kate looks under a ventilation grills only for Kate to inform us, “I found something. Not quite sure what. Have any idea?”
That’s a radio receiver and broadcast speaker,” Gibbs informs us.
“I guess Jessica Smith was hearing voices.”
“Yeah, and we locked her up when they weren’t in head,” I comment sadly.
the guts from a disposable cell phone. You dial number and the device activates,” Abby explains to us in the lab after looking over what Kate found at Jessica’s house in her bedroom.

“Like a terrorist bomb,” Gibbs comments.

“Well yeah, but in this case, instead of an explosion we get this,” Abby happily say before playing the recording that is a creepy, man, voice that is echo on the recording, “Jessica, Jessica, over here, over here.”

“Whoa,” I exclaim in surprise and it sends shivers down my spine.

“It’s like the sound track to Friday the Thirteenth,” Abby says but Gibbs just give him a confused look so she continues, “You know, the movie? There are like eleven of them. Oh, Gibbs. You really need to get out of your basement more.”

“What were they about?” Gibbs ask her because he really doesn’t know.

“Basically there’s this guy that wears a hockey mask and he kills teenagers with a machete usually right after they had sex.”

“Why?”

“Well, he died at summer camp so his mother killed everyone there. But he was actually alive and he was living in the woods. But then he died and he went to hell. And then he was frozen and he went to outer space… It’s complicated.”

“You don’t know, do you?” I ask her with a grin while Gibbs smirks at her because he came to the same conclusion but I just beat him to the punch line.

“Not a clue. I keep hoping they’re going to explain in the next one.”

“You call me when you find something, Abby,” Gibbs orders her before leaving but I just wait in the lab because she has the look she gets when she has something but is making us wait.

“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone in the outside lab because Abby rung him because she has something like he said.

“Found something!” Abby informs him making Gibbs walk back into the lab while hanging up. Abby holds her finger up with a band aid on it and ask Gibbs, “See this?”

“Yes.”

“I cut myself installing a graphics card in my computer.”

“Okay? You want me to kiss it or something?”

That’d be really nice, but it’s not my point. Most of the metal inside electronics is unfinished. I cut myself all the time on burs and rough edges.”

“Yes, well you ought to try building a boat with hand tools after a couple shots of Jack,” Gibbs informs Abby making us smile at him, just imagine Gibbs drunk making me feel even more for him, but I don’t think that is a good idea for the boat.

“Anyway, my point is I was snooping around the circuit board, and I found… this,” Abby exclaims while using a magnifying glass to show us a spot of blood, after a moment she goes on, “It’s blood, Gibbs. Whoever assembled this cut themselves. We have their DNA.”

“That’s great work, Abby. Feel better?” Gibbs ask her after kissing her finger.

“Much,” Abby says happily as we leave the lab back to the squad room.

“Petty Officer Lynn Simons. Avionics and electronics tech. she received a medical discharge three weeks ago. Jessica Smith asked her deliver a message to Captain Vetter. She loved him and promised to forgive him if he would just contact her,” McGee reports after inform us that Jessica was having an affair with Vetter. Everyone is standing around Gibbs desk but for Gibbs and me, Gibbs is sitting in his chair while I am sitting on the ledge behind him.

“Simons failed to report to her therapy session at the V.A. two weeks ago. No one’s seen her since, Gibbs,” Kate reports next.

“Petty Officer Lynn Simons. Avionics and electronics tech. she received a medical discharge three weeks ago. Jessica Smith asked her deliver a message to Captain Vetter. She loved him and promised to forgive him if he would just contact her,” McGee reports after inform us that Jessica was having an affair with Vetter. Everyone is standing around Gibbs desk but for Gibbs and me, Gibbs is sitting in his chair while I am sitting on the ledge behind him.

“Simons failed to report to her therapy session at the V.A. two weeks ago. No one’s seen her since, Gibbs,” Kate reports next.


“You might want to hear this, boss. Vetter and commander Witten both served on the USS Kennedy in ninety nine,” Tony reports.

“It’s a big ship, Tony. Could be a coincidence,” Kate reminds him.
“Yeah, I don’t believe in coincidences,” Gibbs say while Tony and I mouth along with him. Gibbs then rings out on his phone saying, “Hey, it’s me. We need to talk.”

“More like bad cop, scary cop, McGee,” Kate corrects him.

Which one’s which?”

“I think you’ll have to ask their ex-wife that one,” I inform McGee.

“I demand to know what the hell is going on here!” Vetter attempts to order Gibbs and Fornell who is integrating him.

“Not much. Just the end of your life as you know it, captain,” Fornell informs him.

“You see what I’ve had to deal with, agent Gibbs? Threats, intimidation? I won’t stand for it!”

“You told me Petty Officer Smith was like a daughter to you,” Gibbs reminds him.

“What’s that got to do with this?”

“Considering you were sleeping with her, a lot.”

“I want a lawyer.”

“Yeah, you’ll need one. She was murdered.”

“We think it was you,” Fornell informs Vetter.

“Where were you Wednesday night?”

“At home with me wife,” Vetter informs them.

“Well, we checked with her, Vetter. She said you went out. Didn’t come back til around midnight,” Fornell informs Vetter.

“No, she’s lying!”

“Maybe,” Gibbs says distractedly.

“They do tend to get vindictive when they fine out you’ve been cheating on them,” Fornell informs him.

“You told her about Jessica?” Vetter asked in fear.

“I did. You might want to consult a divorce lawyer while you’re at it,” Gibbs informs him.

“I didn’t kill Jessica. I loved her, for God’s sake.”

“He loved her, Gibbs. I guess that’s it then. We’ve got to let him go,” Fornell says to Gibbs sarcastically.

“Sure. After eighty or ninety years in Leavenworth,” Gibbs says back.

“You have means, you have motive and you have no alibi, Vetter.”

“She catch you taking the kickbacks or was she just helping you?”

“She caught me. They money was supposed to have been for us, after the divorce. But I swear to you both, I didn’t… I couldn’t kill her,” Vetter defends himself from one crime by admitting to another crime.

“You know what might help me believe him, Gibbs?” Fornell ask Gibbs.

“If he started crying?” Gibbs offers.

“No. if the good captain here told us where the money is.”

“Are you offering me a deal?” Vetter ask with hope.

“Depends… who else knew the location of the money?” Gibbs answers him.

“Only me, me and Jessica.”

“He’s telling the truth, boss. He stashed the money in a gym locker,” Tony reports while Gibbs, Fornell, McGee and I stand in MTAC listening to his from where he is out in the field. We have a view of the front door that leads to where the money is so we can see who takes the money.

“Who do you think’s going to pick it up, Gibbs?” Fornell ask.

“Our killer,” Gibbs answers.

“Boss, the GPS marker Tony put with the money is showing movement,” McGee reports.

“Bag’s in play, DiNozzo. Have Kate tighten up on the entrance,” Gibbs orders Tony throw the radio.
“Roger that,” Tony says then there is a mumble in the background while he talks to Kate making the view zoom into the door. We watch Petty Officer Simons walk out carrying the bag making Tony comment, “Petty Officer Simons, boss.”

“Well yes, Tony. We can see that, we’re not blinded,” I comment to Tony.

“Take her down?”

“Negative! I want to see where she takes it,” Gibbs informs them.

“Whoa. That’s eight hundred thousand in there, Jethro,” Fornell exclaims angrily.

“Relax, Tobias. It’s not yours,” Gibbs remind Fornell while his phone begins ringing, “Yeah, Gibbs… Lynn Simons. We got it, Abs. Thanks.”

“She’s heading for Bethesda,” McGee comments into the radio to inform Tony and Kate.

“She’s picking up Commander Witten, boss,” Tony guess. But Witten gets in his car and leaves without her so Tony guess again, “Strike that, he’s going to follow her. Or she’s going to follow him?”

“Oh, guess again, sex machine,” Kate corrects Tony while it turns out to be the girl Tony was flirting with. Kate and Tony arrest both women for murder.

“See you tomorrow, boss!”

“Have a good one, Gibbs,” Kate agrees as they run to the elevator.

“Are they dating or something?” I ask Gibbs while leaning over him to open both emails to see a photo of Kate from her wet t-shirt contest and one of Tony as the stripper.

“Nope,” Gibbs answers me while looking at the photos and smirking at them.

“Well that’s disappointing.”

“Why?”

“They’d be so cute to tease about what their kids would look like.”

“You think weird.”

“Gibbs, can we please talk about what happen on the weekend?”

“You kissed me,” I say slowly because it is all I can think about.

“What about it?”

“I’m sorry. I didn’t think it throw properly. I never meant to hurt your feeling or make you uncomfortable. I’m sorry,” Gibbs says to me while gently pulling me into a hug where I breakdown crying. I just couldn’t stand the fact he did that to me, I trusted him and he used the trust against me or that is how it feels.

“You won’t do that again?” I whisper into his chest where my head was tucked into his chest.

“I wouldn’t. I promise. Come on, I’ll take you home, I’m sure Ugly Tony misses you,” Gibbs says to
me once I calm down. He grabbed our gear and place his arm around my back to lead me out to the elevator. I really was going to go throw with Abby’s plan but I couldn’t bring myself to do it with this case going on, but I will do it later.
Tony, Kate and I are standing outside McGee’s home door where we can hear him playing video game inside.

“Hi, probie!” Tony happily says when McGee opens the door and we almost fall into the house. McGee is standing in the doorway in a set of boxers.

“Uh… David, I have to call you back,” McGee says to the mico that is attracted to the headphones he is wearing.

“Told you he was a boxer’s guy.”

“Gee, McGee. I thought for sure you were a tightly whitey man!” Kate complains because she lost the bet with Tony.

“Come on, let’s get dress. You don’t want to keep Gibbs waiting,” I say to McGee while we all walk into his little home.

“You said zero nine hundred. It’s only seven thirty,” McGee defends himself.

“Oh, we thought we’d observe you in your natural environment,” Kate informs him.

“Kind of like watching National Geographic. We watch as the McGee moves slowly from the watering hole trailed by hyenas. Is this the history channel room? Ah, this where you do your writing thing, huh?” Tony asks McGee while typing a random word into McGee’s type writer.

“Look at this!” I exclaim while picking up one of the papers from his ‘book’ and begin reading it, “The Continuing Adventures of L.J. Tibbs…”

“It’s personal,” McGee snaps at me while snatching the page out of my hand so quickly that I get a paper cut.

“Owie.”

“Check it out. He eats dinosaur cereal!” Kate laughs while holding up the cereal for us to see making Tony make dinosaur noises as McGee quickly puts on his pants that have a belt already in them.

“Okay, would you all please just wait by the door… by the door, please,” McGee attempts while we continue to look around his home without listening to him at all.

“Got any Macy Gray in here?” Tony asks while thumbing through McGee’s old records for one he recognizes.

“Tony, don’t touch those! Those are collectables! They’re very valuable.”

“Og, gosh! Sorry! I just thought they were musty old records.”

“It’s bad enough to work on Sundays without you guys ransacking my apartment.”

“Yeah, it was very inconsiderate of that marine sergeant to die on a weekend. I’ll go hold a séance and inform him of that,” I say sarcastically.

“I’m getting my weapon! Don’t touch anything else!”

“Hey!” Kate exclaims.

“George Clooney could not get laid in this place,” Tony comments making Kate laugh in agreement.

“You place needs a lot of help, McGee.”

“At least you’re not building a boat in your basement.”

“Come on,” McGee exclaims as he leaves out the door and we follow him.

“Must be college thing. Hey, where’ve you been?” Gibbs demands of us at the clearing where the crime scene is.

“Stopped for coffee. Got here,” Tony happily says while handing Gibbs one of the cups of coffee before continuing, “You are welcome.”

“Marine Sergeant Joseph Aaron Turner. Found dead at oh-two hundred by a drunk college student.”

“Sounds like hell week.”

“Hell week?” I ask him in confusion.

“Yeah, the fraternal rite of passage. Worst week of my life. Followed by the best four years.”

“Yeah, you were running around in your skivvies, DiNozzo?” Gibbs asks him.
“Technically. Well, back then they made us wear them on our head. I think it was… a sort of character building thing.”

“It certainly explains a lot,” Kate comments while looking at Tony.

Uh-huh. Hey McGee,” Gibbs calls to the resident nerd.

“Yeah,” McGee ask while looking at Gibbs awaiting his order.

“Find out what Turner was doing on campus.”

“Excuse me, special agent Gibbs? I wonder if we could let Mister Pippin go home and dress more appropriately,” Bello, the local police office, ask Gibbs while pointing to the man-child who found the body.

“Sure. After one of my agents interviews him, DiNozzo,” Gibbs orders Tony.

“Uh, you know, I think that’s really more up Kate’s alley,” Tony attempts to the job off.

“Well, maybe, but you two have no much in some. Go.”

“This area popular with students?” I ask Bello.

“For all sorts of extracurricular activities. Bonfires, fraternity pranks,” Bello answers me.

“Hazing?” Kate ask in surprise.

“We’ve had our share of incidents. Broken bones, alcohol poisoning. And this isn’t the first accidental death we’ve seen.”

“Who said anything about an accident?” Gibbs ask him.

“You think this is a homicide?”

“We always do. Until proven otherwise,” I inform Bello.

“Boss, I had Turner’s SRB pulled. He’s an NROTC student attached to the Waverly University campus. Lives in the dorms,” McGee reports to Gibbs quickly.

“Do you have an address?” Gibbs demands.

“Uh… just getting that. I’ll radio his unit.”

“I thought college student were supposed to be poor?” Gibbs ask in surprise because Turner’s dorm room is full of high Tec stuff.

“Most of my midshipmen wouldn’t know how to survive without at least two hundred channels and a DSL hook-up, agent Gibbs,” Leman, our victim’s marine officer instructor, informs us.

“How long have you been Turner’s Marine Instructor, Captain Lemay?” I ask him.

“Since he enrolled last year. You expect to lose men in combat, not on a college campus. What the hell happened to my marine?”

“I’m working on it, captain,” Gibbs informs him.

“What can I do to help?”

“You can start by tell us about him,” I offer.

“He was one of my best midshipmen. Came to us straight from fleet after two combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

“How was he taking to college life?” Gibbs request of him.

“There was a fair amount of culture shock. But like any good marine, he adapted.”

“Any personal problems or issues?” I ask him politely.

“We had a few incidents with student activists on campus.”

“Protesting the war?” Gibbs asks him.

“Protesting anything military. Our unit was vandalized, rallies outside our offices. When word got out that Turner was a vet, he took some heat.”

“What kind of heat?” I ask in disgust, he survived his country, he deserves respect not heat about it.

“Name-calling, mostly. Turner handled it like most marines.”

“Not well,” Gibbs comments.

“He lost five marines in his squad in Iraq. He handled it as best he could, agent Gibbs. He was a damn fine marine.”

“And intelligent too, boss. These are graduate level mathematics. Theoretical calculus,” McGee complements our victim while looking throw his work.

“He was on the advanced track in math and physics. He was a real asset to the corps.”
“Do we know what killed him yet?” Gibbs asks Ducky as we walk into autopsy.

“Sergeant Turner was involved in a nasty fight that resulted in a broken neck,” Ducky informs us.

“He was murdered?” I ask Ducky in surprise because I was hoping it was an accident, because he doesn’t deserve to be murdered after serving his country.

“Yeah.”

“What about these welts?” Gibbs asks while looking at welts all over the victim’s body.

“Certainly painful, but they didn’t do any internal damage. Mostly surface.”

“Are you thinking what I’m thinking, duck?”

“I’m afraid so, Jethro.”

“Call me when you find out,” Gibbs orders Ducky before leading my out of autopsy by placing his hand on my lower back.

“Who would be able to torture our marine?” I ask Gibbs in confusion because he doesn’t sound like someone who would just stay still and take the torture.

“I don’t know,” Gibbs answers me as we enter the elevator to return to the squad room.

“Oh, so glad to see you two don’t need adult supervision,” Gibbs comments as we walk into the lab at night to see Abby and McGee sticking their tongues out at each other.

“McGee was annoying me again,” Abby whines.

“Don’t,” Gibbs orders McGee when he goes to respond to Abby.

“It’s like Kate and Tony all over again,” I comment while looking at the two children.

“What do we have from the crime scene?”

“Oh, um… I got Turner’s toxicology report back. His blood alcohol level was point oh seven. Not drunk,” Abby reports.

“Not sober either. What else?” I ask them.

“There were foreign blood samples found on his face and his knuckles.”

“Yeah, and?” Gibbs asks her.

“And a Chinese menu of chemicals found on his skin. He’s dried paint, turpentine, bleach. It’s like he was partying in a janitor’s closet.”

“What about Turner’s laptop?” I ask them next.

“Well, I completely underestimated the depth of his mathematics ability. I thought that he was concentrating on numerical analysis, but it turns out he was also working on fibre bundles. The work’s a little rough,” McGee reports.

“Anything connected to his death, McGee?” Gibbs snaps at him.

“Not yet.”

“Um… I didn’t go to MIT, but I think I found something. Turner had a private container. It’s like a vault inside the hard drive where you can hide files. Very sophisticated,” Abby informs us.

“Can you open it?” I ask her.

“They don’t call me ‘five fingers Sciuto’ for nothing. Actually, nobody calls me that. My nickname is actually vampenstein, but I never really liked the sound of it.”

“Abby!” Gibbs cuts her rambling off.

“Right. Too much caffeine. Sorry. In just a second… and we… are… in. it’s an encrypted email. He received it on Friday,” Abby says while typing away at her computer to pull up an email.

“The same day he was killed.”

‘Today is the day you die,’ the email reads sending shivers down my spine. He knew that he was going to get killed, that’s scary.

“Maybe I should give you a break, you know, because you’re college girls. What do you think, Simmons?” Leeka, a gunny sergeant, yells out two students that have orange and purple hair.

“No, Gunnery Sergeant?” Simmons, one of the student, answers.

“Damn straight! To me you’re midshipmen! Barely! Understood?!”

“Yes, Gunnery Sergeant!” both the students answer him.
“You pull a stunt like that again with me, and you can both kiss your scholarships goodbye! Go! Away!”

“Gunnery Sergeant Leeks? Special Agent Gibbs, Todd, and probationary agent Todd, NCIS,” Gibbs introduce us.

“Sorry you had to hear all that.”

“What did they do?” Kate ask him in confusion.

“Notice the hair, ma’am?”

“Not regulation?”

“No,” Gibbs answers straight up.

“Purple and orange?” Leeka ask Kate like she is slow and stupid which isn’t something I let people do.

“Oh,” Kate says now she knows what was wrong.

“Sometimes I feel like I’m a kindergarten teacher.”

“Oh yeah, I’m familiar with the sentiment,” Gibbs comments with a smirk.

“So captain Lemay said you wanted to talk to me about Sergeant Turner?”

“What kind of midshipman was he, gunny?” I ask him politely even though I want to kick him where the sun don’t shine for how he spoke to Kate.

“He put most of those kids to shame, ma’am. He would have made one hell of a marine officer.”

“The captain said that he had problems with war protesters,” Kate comments with the hopes of getting him to talk about it without having to ask.

“You could say that, ma’am. One of them spit on his uniform. Turner cleaned his clock.”

“Well, do you think this protester was the type to look for revenge?”

“Are you saying Turner was murdered?”

“We are.”

“I want to know why,” Gibbs states.

“Simmons!” Leeka calls out.

“Sir!” Simmons shouts in respect once he get to us.

“Get me Midshipman Blake! Double time!”

“Yes, gunny!”

“Blake’s a petty officer. He was tight with Turner. He was also the one that pulled him off the protester before the campus cops arrived.”

“Who else was Turner tight with?” I ask him.

“Well, Blake will know. They’re the only two enlisted men in the unit.”

“Excuse me, gunny sergeant!” Simmons calls out while returning to us.

“What, Simmons?”

“Midshipman Blake didn’t report to formation this morning.”

“Blake’s never been UA. Not since I started here.”

“Are you tell me Petty Officer Blake is missing?” Gibbs ask them.

“No, I’m telling you that he is, Agent Gibbs. No one’s seen Blake since Friday night,” Lemay informs us while walking over to us.

“Message on the left was on Turner’s laptop. The message on the right was found on Blake’s. he received it on Saturday, boss,” Tony reports to us while there is two emails with death threats on the plasma after finding Blake, Turner’s best friend, is missing and there was a bloody rag in his room. The amount of blood in the room makes Tony and McGee believe no one can survive that. The two emails are identical except each one has the photo of the marine it was sent to so no one can say it was a generic threat because of that.

“Who sent them?” Gibbs demands.

“McGee’s working on it.”

“What else do we know?” I ask him.

“No one on campus has heard from Blake since Friday.”

“And Abby says that the blood on the rag and bed matched Blake’s type,” Kate reports.
“Two enlisted men. One missing. One dead. What do they have in common?” Gibbs demands before taking a sip of his coffee.

“The resentment of the coalition alliance team for peace, Gibbs.”

“CAT-P. Not a very attractive acronym,” Tony comments.

“Their leader’s a Waverly senior, Hunter Huxley. He’s been arrested five time for disturbing the peace. He’s majoring in political science.”

“Minoring in anti-government subversion and sticking it to the man. I dated a girl like that in college once, boss. Wasn’t bad until she stopped shaving her armpits and her,” Tony ramble making Gibbs, Kate and I give him a look of disgust making his change to, “She owns a car dealership now in case you’re looking for a good deal.”

“Huxley’s been leading the anti-war protests on campus. And last month at a peace demonstration in front of ROTC building, we know that he started spitting on midshipman.”

“And Sergeant Turner dropped him,” I state.

“After that, Huxley made Turner his personal target. Harassed him regularly.”

“You think he could have taken it to the next level?” Tony ask her.

“I think you and Kate are going to go find out,” Gibbs orders them.

“Hey, turn that frown upside down, sweetie! We’re going back to college!” Tony exclaims happily when Kate frowns at that job.

“Tony, your problem is you’ve never left,” Kate informs him.

“Abby and McGee, Tony and Kate. I am so glad that I don’t have anyone to act like a two year old with. It’s humiliation just knowing people who do,” I comment to Gibbs making him agree with me by just nodding at me.

“The student organizations alone are mind-blowing. Did you know that there are seven online mystery writer workshops on campus?” McGee ask Abby in the lab that night after working on the computers.

“No, I didn’t. But I’m sure you’re going to tell me what this had to do with our dead marine,” Gibbs snaps at him as we walk into the lab after hearing him tell Abby.

“I thought that whoever was involved in Turner’s death might have a campus web account. So I hacked into the servers looking for any mention of Turner or Blake.”

“Any hits?” I ask him.

“No, the servers have been pretty quiet,” McGee informs us right as the computer beeps.

“What is that?” Gibbs demands.

“Someone’s IM’ing Sergeant Turner.”

“It’s an instant message, Gibbs,” Abby explains when Gibbs looks more confused than ever about the nerds he has to work with.

“It’s like an email but live.”

“Just put it up on the plasma,” I snap at them.

“Hello, NCIS,” the creep voice on the computer says.

“He’s not on Turner’s buddy list. He’s probably using an alias,” Abby reports.

“Can you trace it, McGee?” Gibbs orders McGee.

“If we can keep him online,” McGee answers him while getting to it.

“Abby, talk to him,” I offer making her grin before typing.

“Okay. Hello, creepy voice,” Abby says while typing it.

“You’re looking in the wrong places,” the creepy voice informs us.

“He’s diverting his connection through half a dozen servers. We’ve got the Baltimore Public Library by way of a public server in Buffalo,” McGee exclaims while tracing it.


“Where should we be looking?” Abby ask the creepy voice.

“Deeper,” the creepy voice informs us.

“Oh, come on. How’s that going to help us?” Abby complains.

“I’ve back-traced him to the Waverly University campus,” McGee informs us.
“Where on campus?” I demand.
“I’m almost there.”
“Look beyond the surface,” the creepy voice orders us.
“Oh, that’s a really clue. When you say beyond the surface, are you being literal or metaphorical. I’m just trying to clarify!” Abby continues to ask the creepy voice.
“They’re everywhere.”
“Okay, I’ve got it down to one city block right off of campus. Just one more second,” McGee informs us without looking away from his computer.
“Goodbye.”
“Got him, boss,” McGee informs us.
“Yeah,” Gibbs says to him.

We arrive at the house where the emailer is at. Gibbs pulls his phone out to call McGee to make sure we are at the right house.
“You are sure about this, right?” Gibbs ask McGee in surprise, “Just answer the question, McGee,” Once McGee answers him he hangs up while ordering us, “Let’s do this. Kate, Alice, cover the back.”
“No! No! Stop!” A girl screams making us jump into action, Tony and Gibbs take the front door while Kate and I sneak around back.
“We’ve got it covered, Kate, Alice,” Tony informs us through our ear piece.
“What do you think happened?” I ask Kate as we return to the front of the building.
“By the sound of Tony’s voice, naked women,” Kate answers me.
“Or women at all.”
“That too,” Kate agrees as we walk in throw the door Gibbs and Tony used only to see it is a slumber party.
“McGee needs to go back to college, these do not look like hackers or creepy computer voices,” I comment making Tony give me a pervy look.
“That’s not what the person sounds like in real life.”
“Doesn’t matter. McGee was wrong.”
“So is Gibbs still mad at me?” McGee ask us as we walk into the lab the next morning after spending the night with the girls from the slumber party who wouldn’t shut up.
“About what, probie? Dead marine on campus? Missing petty officer? Computer hacker who might be part of a radical peace movement? None of these things are your fault, really. But sending Gibbs on a panty raid?” Tony ask making McGee relax before dropping the other shoe making his scared again.
“He’s going to kill you,” Kate agrees with Tony.
“If I don’t first,” I grumble because I didn’t get to go home last night and therefore are very tired and living on coffee today.
“Hey! I want answers. Where is Abby?” Gibbs snaps while walking into the lab.
“Ah, she’s on a run to the evidence garage, boss,” McGee reports.
“She’s on a run to the evidence garage, boss,” Tony reports when Gibbs ignores McGee.
“Anything on the hacker?” Gibbs ask McGee shortly, well short then normal for Gibbs.
“Um… he was on a wireless connection. The house you hit was set up for WIFI. He was probably sitting somewhere outside on the street. I’m working on tracing it right now,” McGee reports.
“Do we have another nerd, this ones broke,” I ask Gibbs while ignoring McGee for the moment.
“No,” Gibbs answers me before ordering McGee, “You tell Abby I want her.”
“Oh Gibbs, I never knew! Ducky asked me to help him figure out where the welts came from. I think I’m gonna start with the ball peen hammer. I don’t know why. I just like the way it sounds… ball peen, ball peen, ball peen, ball peen,” Abby rambles.
“What else?”
“Um… probably go with the stun gun and then the garden weasel. And someone’s in a really bad
mood.”
“Spending the night in a room full of crying women tends to do that to me.”
“Well this will cheer you up. I got the analysis back from the blood found on Turner’s body. It belongs to your missing Petty Officer.”
“Blake? You’re kidding?” Tony asks in surprise.
“I also ran the bloody rag from Blake’s house. Most of it’s his and some of it is not.”
“Sergeant Turner’s?” Kate guesses.
“Bingo.”
“Was his name-o. Blake and Turner were in a fight,” Tony comments.
“One turns up dead and the other hits the road,” Kate comments.
“Or they were both killed together at the same location, dear sister of mine. But we have only found one so far,” I remind her as the IM beeps again making me grind my teeth together in annoyance. It’s the hacker! He’s sending us another instant message,” McGee exclaims while leaning over the computer.
“NCIS, if you want the truth, be at unity quad, ten hundred hours today,” the creepy voice orders us again.
“He’s somewhere on campus right now.”
“Tony, Kate, Alice, you’re with me. And you get me an exact location this time!” Gibbs orders McGee as we leave.
“We need a better nerd, one that not broken,” I complain to Gibbs as we step into the elevator to get out of the building.
“Excuse me. How can we be sure creepy voice is even here, McGee?” Tony snaps at the broken nerd.
“Because Tony, the campus WIFI system is broken down into nodes. And our hacker signal is coming from node five,” McGee answers Tony over the radio.
“Yeah, if you’re not wrong this time,” I mumble but everyone hears me over the radio.
“Yeah? And what does that mean?” Tony asks him.
“It means he’s somewhere in the quad right now so look for somebody with a laptop or a wireless device,” McGee offers making me look around to see every student and teacher on their phones and computers making me snort at him again.
“You’re not real helpful, probie.”
“Less chatter. Keep your eye open. Find him or her,” Gibbs orders us through his microphone.
“Boss, your one o’clock. Red hat, sunglasses. Looking real suspicious,” Tony reports while looking at a young man. Kate and he sneak up behind the person as Gibbs and I wait with berated breath for the take down.
“Ten forty five. The hacker is playing us again,” Kate comments after finding the guy wasn’t our guy.
“No, Kate. I’m telling you, he’s here. Look for something abnormal,” McGee begs of us.
“You’re going to have to be more specific, McGee.”
“Yeah, we have an old pervert, a bitch and an old marine. Can it get any more abnormal?” I ask McGee while looking around anyway missing the look Kate throws at me.
“Look out! Move! Out of the way.” A student by the name of Kyle yells while running away from a mask man.
“His got a gun!” Kate calls as Gibbs and I continue to run to where they are.
“NCIS! Federal agents! Drop the weapon!” Tony orders the mask man who turns to them.
“Put down your weapon!” Kate orders the man who begins to slowly put the gun down.
“Drop the weapon!” Gibbs orders them as we finally arrive at the scene to see the guy finally drop the gun.
“What’s going on?” The student that got shot as while sitting up from his slumped passion as while Gibbs forces Tony’s gun down.
“Shut up, dumb ass,” I snap at him.
“Does that hurt?” Tony ask the student.
“Yeah,” the student answers him.
“Does that hurt right here?” Tony ask while pocking where the paint ball hit.
“Yeah.”
“Kyle Zolin. He’s a midshipmen,” Kate informs us while Gibbs phone rings like normal.
“Yeah, Gibbs… We know. The paint ball gun,” Gibbs answers Abby before hanging up his phone.
“Our victim was shot with the paint ball gun? Hey hurt,” I state while picking up the paint ball gun.
“Yep. Abby conformed it.”
“Agent Gibbs will take it from here, gunny,” Lemay orders Leeka who is chewing the asses off the guys who we just chased down.
“Yes, sir,” Leeka answers him.
“I expect you gentlemen to answer his questions truthfully.”
“Sit down. Where’s Finnigan Blake?” Gibbs demands of the men.
“We don’t know, sir,” Kyle, the one who was ‘shot’, answers him.
“How many midshipman in this little paintball club of yours? Uh, yeah. That’s right. If you snitch them in they’ll probably be kicked out of school just like you. It’s admirable, protecting your friends. Turner doesn’t not need protection. He’s lying dead on a slap with a broken neck. I think Blake is the one who put him there,” I state.
“No. no, not possible, ma’am. They were best friends,” Smith, the ‘mask man’, exclaims.
“Yeah? Then why were they beating the crap out of each other Friday night?” Gibbs ask but when they don’t answer he shouts, “You were there!”
“Yes, sir, but it’s not what you think,” Kyle begins.
“They tossed a couple punches, we broke it up,” Smith continues.
“An hour later, they were drinking beer and laughing about it.”
“Does that look like a couple of punches to you, midshipman? His neck is snapped in half,” I snap at the boys while showing them the autopsy photo of Turner.
“He didn’t look like that when he left,” Smith begins.
“What was the fight about?” Gibbs cuts him off.
“Turner never lost a paintball game, so Blake decided to change the rules,” Kyle explains.
“By killing him?” I ask in disbelief.
“No, ma’am. We played one on one. But Friday morning we all got Turner’s target photo in our email, and we ambushed him.”
“It was supposed to be funny,” Smith defends them.
“I want the names of everyone in your club. You do that and we can talk about your futures,” Gibbs orders them.
“And if we don’t?”
“Son, you trust me. You will not do well in prison,” Gibbs informs him while leaning down into Smith’s personal space making him very unconfutable.
“They call themselves, the red cell. They all claim the last time they saw Blake was on Friday night, right after the fight,” Kate reports while their photos are on the plasma in screen.
“We think they were protecting him,” Tony comments.
“Who else knew about the group?” Gibbs and I ask him together.
“According to them, no one. Only the red cell members,” Kate answers him.

“They’re either lying, or one of them is the hacker that lead us to the group.”

“Find him,” Gibbs orders.

“Boss,” McGee exclaims while walking into the squad room.

“You find the hacker yet?” I ask him as Gibbs gets up to walk away.

“Uh, no? But,” McGee begins but Gibbs just walk off to the stairs to go up to either the director’s office or MTAC.

“Poor probie,” Tony comments.

“You think he needs a group hug?” Kate ask Tony feeling bad for McGee.

“Oh…”

“I found Blake,” McGee calls out to Gibbs back making him freeze halfway up the stairs before turning and walking back to us.

“I’ve been motoring the campus WIFI and I was waiting for the hacker to come back online and that’s when I thought of it. When we searched Blake’s room, he had the docking station for an Axim X Five handheld computer. But the unit itself was not in his room,” McGee explains in the lab while showing us on the computer.

“And they’re like two thousand bucks. He probably took it with him when he pulled his disappearing act,” Abby adds.

“Why does this matter?” I ask them in confusion.

“Because it has wireless built-in. It automatically connects to the nearest network. He is online right now,” McGee reports happily.

“Where?” Gibbs demands.

“Waverly University, node three. And according to the network logs, he’s been hiding out there since Saturday morning.”

“Not bad, McGee. Let’s roll!” Gibbs orders before we leave the lab to find our missing midshipman.

“Are you sure about this, Tim?” Kate ask McGee while we walk around campus following McGee’s computer.

“I’m sure. He’s here, or at lease his computer is,” McGee answers her.

“Well, I hope for your sake that you’re right.”

“I’m right, okay?” McGee snaps at her as his computer beeps making him exclaim, “Wait. He’s in the building behind this one.” Tony and I walk in the front around the back to the next building to see an excavation site.

“I’ve got some bad news for you, probie,” Tony states.

“I don’t understand. He should be here.”

“Maybe he disappeared with the building.”

“I’m telling you, he’s here,” McGee promises while walking throw the gate he just opened. He walks throw the site looking at his computer where it is beeping about like it is about to blow up or something. “Signal’s getting stronger. It’s here!” McGee exclaims when the beeping is almost constant.

“Where?” Gibbs and I demand because he is standing in the middle of the empty lot.

“It’s right below me. He must have buried it.”

“We’re being screwed with again,” Tony comments what we are all thinking.

“It’s the hacker, McGee,” Kate comments.

“I found something! It’s a body. It’s lying face down. This is where the head should be. He’s wearing a hood,” McGee calls out after digging in the ground while Kate and Tony where talking.

“This is now a crime scene,” Gibbs comments.

“It’s Blake,” McGee comments when he removes the hoody to see the face of Blake.

“He’s not lying face down,” I comment while looking at our poor victim.
Petty Office Blake was killed early Saturday morning, just hours after Sergeant Turner’s death. Now, we're dealing with a killer who is not only extremely powerful, but methodical. Each of these young men had their necks broken in a violent and identical fashion, I think by someone using their bare hands,” Ducky reports.

“Well, how’s that?” Jimmy asks Ducky in confusion.

“Ah, well it’s a very specific technique. May I demonstrate, Mister Palmer?”

“Of course, Doctor.”

“Oh hand is placed firmly on the jaw here, and the other hand,” Ducky explains while trying to demonstrate it on himself.

“Yeah, I’ll do it, Duck,” Gibbs says making Duck stop and Jimmy freeze in fear because Gibbs is going to use him as a crash dummy.

“Oh. Thank you, Jethro.”

“This ought to be good,” Tony comments.

“No, on you,” Gibbs orders Tony.

“Do you think that’s really necessary?” Tony asks Gibbs but he just gives him a look that says ‘yes this is necessary.’

“Yeah, it’ll be fun. You can wither lie on the floor or I’ll drop you to the floor. We used it to silence enemy sentries,” Gibbs orders Tony while dropping him to the ground without giving him the opinion. Gibbs then kneels over the while begins to demonstrate while telling us what he is doing, “One hand on the jaw, the other behind the head of the individual. Sixty-six pounds of torque and snap! Your eyes are on the back of your head. DiNozzo, any questions?”

“No, I think I got it, boss! You missed your calling, boss. You could have been a chiropractor,” Tony jokes as Gibbs and Tony get up off the floor.

“We’re looking for someone who knows how to kill,” I comments.

“Yes, what trouble me is our midshipmen, in order to receive such a killing blow, would have to been face to face with their assailants. Which means wither they were ambushed or,” Ducky rambles.

“They knew him,” Gibbs comments.

“And he trusted them to get that close,” I comments.

“Hey, another midshipman? They teach combat courses at the NROTC unit,” Tony reminds us.

“Maybe. You find my hacker yet?” Gibbs demands of Tony.

“McGee’s upstairs working on it.”

“I didn’t ask McGee. I asked my senior field agent. I want that damn hacker!” Gibbs snaps at Tony.

“Or Ari,” I offer to Tony sweetly before leaving autopsy with Gibbs.

“I hate to say it but that was actually smart, Tony,” Kate comments while Gibbs walks into the squad room to hear her say that.

“What was, Kate?” Gibbs asks her.

“Tony might have figured out how to find the hacker.”

“It’s his job,” I remind her.

“You think I keep him around for his personality?” Gibbs asks her in surprise.

“What personality?”

“There are twenty two midshipmen in the unit with computer science majors. Only one of them has a four point oh. Look familiar?” McGee asks Tony.

“You want to bring him in with me?” Tony asks McGee.

“Considering he embarrassed me, almost got me fired and ruined my weekend? What do you think?” McGee asks while they get their gear and leave the squad room.

“Hey, so what do they call it? The box? The coffin? The sweat shop?” Frankel, the hacker, asks Tony in integration while Gibbs, Kate and I stand in the observation room watching the integration.

“We just call it interrogation,” Tony explains.

“What’s the deal? You lean on me first then bring your partner in? get me bladdering? Are you the good cop or the bad cop?”
“Sit. Okay, I’m going to be honest with you. This is a major waste of time. You clearly didn’t do this.”
“Reverse psychology.”
“But my boss, he needs to close the case,” Tony exclaims while looking at Gibbs throw the two way window.
“Brass wants answers.”
“There is this other agent… Kate. Severe looking thing. No sense of humour. She built the profile on you,” Tony comments making Kate glare at him in anger.
“What kind of interrogation technique is that?” Kate demands ion anger.
“The DiNozzo method. Not pretty, but it’s effective,” Gibbs answers her.
“It turns out you’re the geek’s geek. The last one to be picked for the team,” Tony explains the profile.
“That’s not true,” Frankel exclain in anger and fear.
“This isn’t me, Urkel, okay? I think you’re great. Sure you broke a few federal laws interfering with an ongoing murder investigation.”
“I was trying to help you.”
“Right. It’s the way you did it that’s suspicious.”
“Look at me. The last thing I need is to be pegged as a rat in the unit. Those guys would have killed me.”
“Maybe you were looking for payback? They wouldn’t let you into their little club?”
“That’s crazy.”
“You know what’s crazy? Me almost putting a bullet in a kid’s head ‘cause he’s playing paintball. That’s a little crazy.”
“I didn’t… I didn’t want anyone to get hurt. I was just trying to help. Turner was a friend.”
“So you thought sending cryptic email was going to help us find his killer?”
“I think I know who killed him.”
“Who?”
Petty Officer Blake.”
“Yeah? Why’s he do it?”
“There’s this girl in the unit. Ashley Simmons. She used to date Blake but they broke up.”
“She started dating Turner?”
“I’m not sure. I know he liked her.”
“He liked her? Not a real strong motive for murder, Urkel.”
“Well, last week I saw all three of them together in the quad. Ashley was crying. Turner and Blake started arguing with each other.”
“About what?”
“I… I couldn’t hear, but I saw Blake push him.”
“So they fought?”
“No Turner just left with Ashley. When I asked him about it later, he said it was personal, something between the three of them.”
“Well that’s a real interesting theory, Matlock. One problem.”
“What?”
“Blake’s dead. He was murdered a few hours after Turner.”
“But by who?”
“Someone who wanted to frame him for the murder of his best friend.”
“Find Midshipman Ashley Simmons now,” Gibbs orders us.
“Why is your hair still purple, Simmons?” Leeka demands of Simmons in the ward room as we walk up to them.
“It takes a few days to wash out, gunny,” Simmons explains to the gunny.
“I hope the time you’ve spent field-daying is starting to sink in. I own you until the day you graduate.”
“Yes, gunny. It won’t happen again.”
“Do you want to give people orders someday? You need to learn how to follow them.”
“Sounds like pretty good advice, gunny,” Gibbs says making our presence known.
“Good evening, sir. Any luck finding Blake?”
“That’s why we’re here,” I promise.
“We can talk about this in my office. You missed a spot over there, Simmons.”
“Actually, we’re here for her, gunny,” Kate explains.
“Simmons? For what?”
“We found Blake,” Gibbs states straight up.
“Where?”
“He’s dead,” I state.
“We think she knows why,” Tony adds.
“I don’t know anything about it,” Simmons exclaims in confusion.
“Then you won’t mind answering a few questions,” Kate says to her.
“Take her out to the sedan. I’ll be right out,” Gibbs orders them.
“But I don’t know anything!” Simmons exclaims while leaving.
“Tell me everything you know about her, gunny,” Gibbs orders Leeka.
“Simmons?” Leeka ask before continuing, “Kind of a screwed up, but not a bad kid. Do you think she’s involved in this?” but we didn’t answer him so he continues, “I’m getting to old for this crap. ROTC was supposed to be an easy tour. You want a cup?”
“Uh, no. No, thanks. I’ll pass,” Gibbs answers when Leeka offers us coffee.
“Mm, good call. So just how was Blake murdered?” Leeka ask while putting the coffee down when he tasted the bad taste.
“Neck was broken,” I state without hesitation.
“Wow. Two identical neck-breaks.”
“Yeah. We think the killer has military training,” Gibbs comments what I have said repeatedly.
“I’ll have everyone in this unit standing by tomorrow. You can question them all at the same time.”
“Thanks, gunny. I appreciate it. Just one thing.”
“What, sir?”
“We said that Blake has been found dead. You said murdered,” I state making Leeka freeze when he release that he slipped up. Leeka locks the door as Gibbs phone begins ringing making us all jump at the sudden sound.
“Are you gonna answer that?” Leeka ask Gibbs.
“No. No, I’m pretty sure I know what it is they want to tell me. Put your hands up,” Gibbs orders while pulling out his phone. Leeka kicks the gun out of Gibbs hands before lunging at Gibbs that starts a fight between them. I pick up Gibbs gun so that Leeka can’t use it against Gibb, as Gibbs slams Leeka onto the ground throw the glass table that was in the way.
“Not bad, agent Gibbs.”
“I’d give up now. It’s only going to get worse,” Gibbs promises him as the fight continues. Leeka throws Gibbs off him and at the book shelf that his unfortunately behind me making my body pinned between Gibbs and bookshelf. Leeka repeatedly punch Gibbs in the face while they both try to get other man in a head lock to end the fight. There is a banging on the door of Tony and Kate trying to get into the room but the door is locked. Leeka throws Gibbs onto the floor and gets his hands around Gibbs jaw as I move to the door to unlock it to let backup in to help, because I know that I am not able to fight a fully trained midshipman.
“You should have stayed out of this, old man,” Leeka hisses at Gibbs. I get to the door to unlock it as there is a gunshot from the other side making my jump with pain radiating from the same arm Ari shot. As this happens it destructs Leeka enough for Gibbs to get the upper hand and knock Leeka unconscious. Gibbs gets to his feet moments before Kate and Tony rush into the room.
“Cuff him,” Gibbs orders while looking more haggard then I have ever seen.
“Sure think, boss,” Tony happily says while going to do it.
“Somehow I don’t remember college being quite like this,” Kate comments.
“It reminds me of this time at Ohio State. We had this frat guy…”
“The next person who mentions a spring break, or a frat party, or college, is fired! Are we clear!?"
Gibbs snaps at them while walking over to me to check I am okay.
“Yes,” Kate and Tony exclaim together.
“Good. Are you alright?”
“I am going to kill Tony,” I hiss while holding my arm where a bit of wood hit grazed my arm when Tony blow the lock out.
“Come on,” Gibbs orders me.
“Can I kill him now?”
“Latter, after Ducky looks at that arm,” Gibbs orders me.
“IT will just be some bad bruising,” Ducky informs me after looking over my battered body from the wood and being trapped behind Gibbs weight.
“Thanks. Sorry that our Sunday dinner was cancelled,” I say softly.
“It’s alright. I have nothing to do for a couple of hours. Let’s go get a late lunch and talk,” Ducky offers to me making me smile, I can kill Tony another time.
“Sounds like fun. What are we going to eat?”
“Is that all you care about? Food?”
“And coffee, but mainly food. It’s the best thing in the world.”
“There’s a pizza place near here. It’s good.”
“That sounds good. I like pizza. Pizza is good.”
“We’re leaving in five minutes. Where have you been?” Kate asks Tony as he storms into the squad room later than normal.
“I got the call. I’m here,” Tony snaps in annoyance.
“Don’t take your anger out on my sister,” I hiss at Tony with a glare making him glare at me in return.
“Get up on the wrong side of the bed, did we?” Kate asks Tony teasingly.
“My car got towed. I had to take the bus to work this morning,” Tony complains.
“Where was it parked?” I ask him.
“That’s not important, Alice.”
“Didn’t make it home last night, did you?” Kate teases him.
“Hi, this is Anthony DiNozzo. I’m trying to locate my car. It was towed from the thirty-four hundred block of Dumbarton in Georgetown. You’ve already put me on hold three times. You killed my cell phone battery. Do not put me in hold again! Do not” Tony orders the person on the other end of his phone call.
“Dumbarton, near campus?” I ask him.
“I really hope she was over twenty-one,” Kate comments happily.
“You’d love to know, wouldn’t you? Going somewhere this weekend?” Tony asks us when he sees the two bags near Kate’s desk, after she lifted her on onto the desk while my stays on the ground.
“Love to know, wouldn’t you?” Kate repeats what he just said.
“Truck’s gassed up. Ducky already left,” McGee reports while walking into the squad room before clocking Tony behind his desk so he adds, “You made it.”
“Don’t start, probie,” Tony hisses in annoyance.
“This is going to be a fun day,” I comment while giving Tony a look for being a sourpuss.
“You know what kind of people take the bus?” Tony complains.
“Yeah, I take the bus,” McGee exclaims.
“Exactly.”
“Hey, I heard you’re going to Norfolk,” Abby exclaims while bouncing into the squad room.
“Shouldn’t be a problem. We should still be able to leave by six,” Kate promises her.
“Leave? For where? You two spending the weekend together,” Tony asks happily while ignoring the final bag, my bag. He purrs before adding, “Hold on. Let me paint a picture.”
“You’re a pig.”
“Probie, any idea where they’re going?”
“Sorry, I cannot divulge that information, Tony,” McGee admits to Tony without admitting where.
“Health spa,” Gibbs informs Tony.
“Gibbs,” Abby and I exclaim in annoyance, it was nice having something Tony didn’t know.
“He’ll spend all day trying to figure it out. I do not need him distracted,” Gibbs defends himself making me pout in annoyance.
“I appreciate that, boss,” Tony exclaims.
“What’s you find out about the petty officer?”

“He rented a storage locker ten months ago just before he was shipped off to Iraq,” Kate reports.

“Died in Falluja last week. His body us at the Theatre Mortuary Evacuation Point in Kuwait,” McGee adds.

“McGee, you stay here. Contact NCIS in Iraq. Find out everything you can about Petty Officer Dobbs,” Gibbs orders the probie.

“On it.”

“DiNozzo. Same clothes you wore here yesterday?”

“He had a friend last night who may not be twenty-one,” I explain to Gibbs for Tony.

“I buy a lot of the same things. It makes morning less stressful,” Tony defends himself before talking into his phone, “Yeah, I’m here!”

“Now you’re gone,” Gibbs comments while hanging up Tony’s phone for him.

“Talk to me, Duck,” Gibbs orders from inside the storage shed where a skeleton body was found in the back of a dead soldier’s Ute tray.

“Well, it’s definitely female, Jethro. The male pelvis is shaped like a butterfly. The female’s is wider and has larger superior and inferior apertures to facilitate child birth,” Ducky answers him.

“Age?” I ask him next.

“Oh, I’d estimate seventeen to twenty. The public symphysis is an excellent yardstick of age,” Ducky rambles as we leave store room.

“Tell me about it,” Gibbs orders Tony who looks like someone just killed his dog and cut his penis off.

“Is it that obvious? I’m sorry, boss. It’s just upsetting. My car wasn’t towed. It was stolen,” Tony informs us.

“Tell me about the storage locker, DiNozzo.”

“Right. Uh… every renter has a code to enter the main gate. Locker number plus the last four digits of their security number. Manager’s checking the computer to see if anyone accessed petty officer Dobbs’s locker. Sorry.”

“Contact NCIS Iraq?” Gibbs demand of McGee as we return to the squad room.

“They were well aware of petty officer Dobbs,” McGee reports.

“He got in trouble?” I ask him.

“Just the opposite, Alice. His CO wrote him up for a posthumous Silver Star. Actually, the CO wants to talk to you. He’s standing you by to go on satellite right now.”

“Kate, talk to LEOs in Dobbs’ hometown. Verify what the girl told us. Do not tell them what we found,” Gibbs orders Kate.

“Got it,” Kate says while Tony picks up his phone.

“DiNozzo, talk to the insurance agent on your own time. Get down to the garage. Start an inventory on petty officer Dobbs’ stuff,” Gibbs orders tony before we walk to MTAC.

“Under heavy fire, petty officer Dobbs single-handedly dragged two marines to safety. He saved their lives at the cost of his own. That’s why I recommended him and forwarded it up the chain of command. Now I understand you’re a former marine, agent Gibbs,” King explain on the screen in MTAC.

“I am,” Gibbs agrees.

“Then you know we don’t take this lightly. This was an extraordinary young man. Now this is Lance Corporal Jaime Ramos. He served with Petty Officer Dobbs.”

“Sir, Petty Officer Dobbs wasn’t a marine, but he was one of us. He served in our platoon the whole tour as our corpsman. What they’re saying about Doc can’t be true, sir. He died saving lives over here,” Ramos reports to us.

“Whatever you can do, we’d appreciate it, agent Gibbs.”

“Understood, Lieutenant,” I say to them.
“The thing is, sir, ma’am, Doc isn’t around to defend himself now. You have to, sir,” Ramos informs us.

“Duck, is it her?” Gibbs asks as we walk into autopsy faster than normal.

“She is indeed Nora Webb, Jethro. I have a positive ID using dental records from the FBI’s missing person’s database,” Ducky reports.

“How long’s she been dead?” I ask him.

“How long’s she been missing?”

“Almost two years. Petty officer Dobbs rented the locker ten months ago,” Gibbs informs Ducky.

“Well, I venture that she met her fate around the time of her disappearance. Plus I can’t be certain until I know where the young lady’s remains were kept.”

“The deterioration will be effected by whether she was indoors, void of the elements, or buried outside in the… ground,” Jimmy explains to us.

“How long’s she been missing?” I ask Ducky.

“Uh… that will be hard to determine,” Ducky fails to answer me.

“Duck, I need to know,” Gibbs begs before leaving the autopsy making me have to follow him again.

“I spoke with a LEO in Richfield, Virginia. Officer Billy Krieg confirms that Justin Dobbs was a person of interest in the disappearance of Nora Webb,” Kate reports as we return to the squad room.

“What else?” Gibbs demands while sitting down behind his desk and I lean on the ledge behind him.

“Not much. Dobbs enlisted out of high school. He was raised by a single mother who died of cancer while he was in boot camp. Got in the advanced medical training program. Made PO three.”

“Boss, Lieutenant Commander Coleman wants to talk to you,” Tony reports while leading a female into the squad room.

“Tell her I’m not here,” Gibbs orders him.

“Why don’t you tell me yourself?” Coleman, a lawyer at Jag, says while coming to a stop in front of Gibbs desk.

“Commander Coleman.”

“Special Agent Gibbs,” Coleman copies him while they stare off.

“Tony,” Kate says while grabbing him to pull him away.

“Kate,” Tony whines.

“McGee,” Gibbs says while nodes at Kate and Tony for McGee to go with them and I get up to follow them leaving Gibbs to have a private moment.

“Tell her I’m not here,” Gibbs orders him.

“Why don’t you tell me yourself?” Coleman asks while coming to a stop in front of Gibbs desk.

“Commander Coleman.”

“Special Agent Gibbs,” Coleman copies him while they stare off.

“Tony,” Kate says while grabbing him to pull him away.

“Kate,” Tony whines.

“McGee,” Gibbs says while nodes at Kate and Tony for McGee to go with them and I get up to follow them leaving Gibbs to have a private moment.

“You think they have a history?” Tony asks us while looking at Gibbs and the lawyer.

“Tony,” Kate hisses at him while I grind my teeth together in annoyance.

“What?”

“Leave it,” Kate orders him while placing his arm around my shoulder to calm me down so I don’t do something I while regret later.

“Cancel all weekend plans,” Gibbs orders us as Coleman leaves.

“Well, from this video, it doesn’t look like anything’s wrong,” McGee reports to us.

“Sure brings back memories, probie. Oh, I don’t suppose you had a car to wash in high school.”

“Actually, I did, Tony. My parents bought one for me the day I turned sixteen.”

“Let me guess… Yugo?”

“No, I was much cooler than that.”
“I’m sorry. What was I thinking? I forgot who I’m dealing with here. Uh… duster?”
“Nope.”
“Gremlin?”
“You’re not going to guess it, Tony.”
“One of the ford trilogy of dork mobiles? Maverick? Fiesta? Pinto? If you say Datsun Honeybee, I’m going to come over there and smack you.”
“Eight four Camaro Z-twenty-eight, five speed.”
“That’s a smokin’ hot car, McGee. What the hell went wrong with you?” Tony demands while walking over to McGee’s desk where she is sitting.
“Well, the first day I got behind the wheel, I had a slight… Thing.”
“Head on?”
“I was trying to figure out the wipers. I took my eyes off the road for a second. When I looked up, there it was right in front of me.”
“Car!”
“I didn’t know.”

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“Are you sure it’s Nora Webb?” Whalen, one of the police officers in the police station in Richfield Virginia, informs us.
“We’re sure,” Gibbs promises.
“Knew the sonofabitch did it.’
“Justin Dobbs was the prime suspect?” Kate ask him in surprise.
“Nora Webb was last seen leaving a party with him.”
“Kids saw her drive off in the truck. The next day her parents reported her missing,” Krieg, another police officer, informs us.
“When we brought him in, he had scratches on his face and arms.”
“I’m sure he had an explanation, of course,” I state.
“Don’t they always. Said she got abusive before he dropped her home.”
“People at the party thought they saw him coming onto her,” Krieg adds.
“They ever have anything between them before?” Kate ask them.
“No, but he had been drinking.”
“So you think he pressed it with her in the car. When she didn’t go along, things got out of hand.”
“Figured he’d bury her in the woods. When we couldn’t find the body, the DA chose not to go forward. After graduation, Justin Dobbs slinked out of town in a navy uniform,” Whalen says in disgust.
“Petty Officer Dobbs died in that uniform saving lives, Chief,” Gibbs reminds him.
“I appreciate that, agent Gibbs. Doesn’t excuse taking one before he left.”
“I’d like a copy of that case file,” I tightly say to him.
“Not a problem. Pull it, Billy. Then show our friends where the copy machine is.”

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“Chief Whalen doesn’t have a doubt about petty officer Dobbs guilt,” Kate comments as we walk into the plant nursery where Nora’s parents own.
“Nope,” Gibbs agrees with her.
“So what do you think?”
“If I was him, I wouldn’t either. Mister and Mrs. Webb, special agent Gibbs, Todd and probationary agent Todd. NCIS,” Gibbs says to the parents while showing them his cadge.
“We know,” Kathy Webb, the victim’s mother, snaps at us in annoyance.
“Mister and Mrs Webb, you all take care. Been pushing for a faster copier. Hope it didn’t cause too much inconvenience,” Whalen says to us before leaving back to his job of accusing war heroes of being scum of the earth.
“When do we get our daughter back?” Bruce Webb, the victim’s father, demands of us in anger.
“Our investigation is almost over,” I promise him.
“Chief Whalen concluded the investigation a long time ago.”
“If Justin murdered your daughter, our investigation will only confirm it,” Gibbs informs him.
“We don’t need a confirmation!” Bruce snaps at us making Kathy cries.
“Do you know how… how she died?” Kathy asks us throwing her tears.
“We’re working on it. But when our investigation is over, we will tell you how,” I promise her.
“Is that all?” Bruce demands of us.
“We just have a few questions,” Kate attempts to say.
“No, I’m not going to do it,” Bruce snaps at her.
“I know this is difficult.”
“You don’t know anything, lady.”
“Mister Webb…”
“Kate,” Gibbs cuts her off before turning to the Webbs and saying, “Appreciate your time. Thank you.” Once Gibbs says that and shakes the hands of our victim’s parents, we turn and leave the nursery.

“Was it Nora,” Emmy states as we walk into the bike shop she works in.
“It was. How long have you known about Justin’s storage locker, Emmy?” Gibbs asks her.
“A week. When I read the will. Thanks.”
“You didn’t read it until he died?” I ask her in slight surprise.
“Anything wrong with that?”
“Who else knew about the will?” Kate asks her.
“No idea. He wrote it up online. I didn’t recognize the names of the witnesses. Guys from his unit, I guess.”
“We’ll need a copy,” Gibbs informs her.
“Okay.”
“So you and Petty officer Dobbs,” Kate begins.
“We were tight in high school. Listen, it was his idea to go off to the stupid war, okay? I didn’t need this.”
“And you and Nora Webb?”
“Friends. It was high school, okay? Customer’s waiting. Are we through?”
“For now. There are a lot of pissed off people here in Richfield,” Gibbs comments making Emmy walk away in a huff.

“Who’s the cop?” Kate asks McGee about the video playing on the plasma screen twenty-four hours after we got the case.
“McGee admits.
“‘What do you have, McGee?’ Gibbs demands of McGee.
“The records show that no one accessed the storage facility with Petty Officer Dobbs’ code after he deployed.”
“Personal effects?” I ask McGee next.
“Nothing out of the ordinary. Only thing of interest was a padlock key identical to the one Emmy Poole had.”
“Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his ringing phone before turning to the elevator after hanging up.
“DiNozzo!” Gibbs yells out the boy still looking for his car.
“Boss, you’re not going to believe this. My car was used in a convenience store robbery in Tennessee. But I’m… I’m cool. So not important in the grand scheme of things,” Tony comments.

“You’ve had twenty-four hours,” Coleman informs us snidely in MTAC.
“Not enough time,” Gibbs informs her.
“Petty Officer Dobbs’ body left Kuwait an hour ago. What do I tell the SECNAV?”
“Nothing conclusive at this point.”
“You are forcing me to have the medal withheld.”
“You might be denying a hero his due,” I remind her in disgust, how can she do that for someone who died surviving his country.
“Give me something, Gibbs. Is there anything working in his favour?” Coleman asks Gibbs while ignoring my presents altogether.
“You’re breaking up, Faith,” Gibbs informs her.
“I can see you just fine.”
“Must be a collar flare,” I inform her while Gibbs gives the signal to cut the connection.
“Gibbs,” Coleman says before the call gets ended by the tech. Gibbs and I leave MTAC to see Ducky standing out the door waiting to talk to Gibbs.
“Such a mysterious room,” Ducky comments.
“You got something, Duck?” Gibbs asks his long-suffering friend.
“Yeah. Cause of death, strangulation. Things not going to well?”
“Running out of time,” I inform Ducky sadly before adding, “Their not going to give a hero his metal because of us.”
“Do you ever think that the Petty Officer might be guilty?”
“It crossed my mind,” Gibbs admits.
“And more than once, obviously. Otherwise you’d be telling me your gut says he’s not guilty.”
“Some marine’s guts in Iraq say that.”
“But not yours?”
“Yeah. Yeah, my gut says it, too.”
“Your gut… or semper fi?” Ducky asks as we walk down the stairs to the squad room.
“Emmy Poole is holding back. I want her in interrogation now,” Gibbs orders his team. After hearing the order Kate picks up her phone to get her.
“This is NCIS Special Agent Todd. I’d like to speak with Emmy Poole,” Kate says into the phone.
“Nice truck,” Krieg comments as we arrive at Emmy’s house after she was found dead.
“If we hadn’t called the house, would you have notified us?” Gibbs demands of the idiot cop.
“Eventually,” Whalen informs us.
“I’d sure like my people to take a look.”
“It was a suicide. What do you expect to find?”
“Emmy Poole was material to our investigation,” I remind them.
“The investigation into a murder that took place two years ago. When Justin Dobbs was a civilian. That was a local matter. Just like this is.”
“Understood,” Gibbs comments.
“You have to take a look around… fine. We just removed the body. Crime scene’s intact,” Whalen promises us before we enter the house and walk throw to Emmy’s bedroom.
“Who found her?” I ask the local cops.
“The mother.”
“I’d like to speak with her,” Gibbs informs him.
“You’re welcome to read her statement. She’s with friends. Didn’t want to stay in the house tonight.”
“Leave a note?” I ask him.
“Not that we found. Mother said she’s been depressed. On medication for the past couple years.”
“Since the disappearance of Nora Webb,” Gibbs comments.
“Where are you going with this, Gibbs? According to the mother, Emmy was close to Nora. Took her disappearance hard. Don’t think finding the body helped.”
“Yeah, we spoke to Emmy this afternoon. The thing is, I kelp getting the feeling she wasn’t tell us everything she knew.”
“All there is to know is… Justin Dobbs killed Webb.”
“You’re so sure of that. But want evidence do you have to prove that?” I ask the moron making his glare at me for questioning his ability to investigate. After looking throw the house where the second young lady has died in this case we split up, Kate and Tony go to attempt to talk to Nora’s mother
while Gibbs and I leave to try and get more time on this case.

“Is this your idea of an apology?” Coleman asks Gibbs when she finishes her run to see Gibbs and me leaning against her car with coffee for us and once for her.

“For what? I just don’t like to drink alone,” Gibbs comments while handing her a cup.

“The fact you know where to find me on a Sunday morning is a little scary, Gibbs. Please.”

“Not as scary as your truck,” I comment while looking at the mess that is disgusting.

“What do you want?”

“Talked to the office of the SECNAV yet?” Gibbs asks her.

“No.”

“The girl who found the remains in Petty Officer Dobbs’ truck is dead. Suicide, if you believe the incompetent officers,” I comments.

“You think she was involved?”

“I don’t know. She could have had an accomplice. I need more time,” Gibbs informs her.

“Petty Officer Dobbs’ funeral is tomorrow.”

“Not if I order his remains quarantined at Dover Morgue.”

“What are you put to?”

“We need our ME to examine the body as part of our investigation,” I inform her.

“Dobbs died as a result of enemy fire in Iraq. What bearing does that have on a girl who was killed two years ago in Richfield, Virginia?”

“You can never be too thorough,” Gibbs informs her.

“You’re pushing it, Gibbs. Why are you sticking your neck out for this guy?”

“Several Marines witnessed Petty Officer Dobbs saving lives.”

“No one witnessed him taking one. And there hasn’t been any evidence saying he took it, just that the body was in his locker,” I finish for Gibbs.

“I think it’s the power supply,” McGee comments while looking over the mass spectrometer which is not working.

“You think?” Abby hisses at him in annoyance.

“It would be helpful if I had a service manual.”

“I was at church, Gibbs,” Abby complains while turning away from McGee to us.

“What do you got, Abs?” Gibbs asks her.

“First of all, you own me big time. It took Kate, Alice and me six months to get the reservations to that spa.”

“If you tell me you found something, I’ll think about making it up to you,” Gibbs promises her.

“Typical man. Promise you everything until he gets what he wants. Right, McGee?”

“Well actually, I,” McGee begins but Abby cuts him off.

“Thanks, McGee. So I found dirt on her femur bone and identical traces on the inside of the plastic she was wrapped in, but not on the outside!”

“Nora was buried in the ground. Then removed,” I ask her in surprise.

“And then wrapped in plastic and then put in that truck,” Abby finished for me.

“Chief Whalen always thought she was buried in the woods,” Gibbs informs her.

“Maybe yes, maybe no.”

“You got anything more specific than dirt?” I ask her.

“Well, I was trying, except my mass spectrometer crashed. And there’s a certain MIT grad that’s supposed to be fixing it but he’s actually made it worse.”

“Sooner than later, McGee,” Gibbs orders him before leading me out of the lab since she doesn’t have anything to prove as soldier innocent or guilty yet.

“Oh, there you are,” Ducky exclaims as we step into the elevator where he is.

“Appreciate you coming,” Gibbs says to him while hitting the button to close the elevator and begin going down.

“It’s a godsend, actually. Mother has the ladies of the Kennel Club over for cocktails.”
“Take a ride, Duck.”
“Oh, I had a conversation with the ME at Richfield. He came to the same conclusion. Suicide, indeed. The lacerations on the young girl’s wrists gave every indication of being self-inflicted. But that’s not why you asked me in here,” Ducky releases when Gibbs just give him a hard look.
“They’re holding Petty Officer Dobb’s body for you at the Dover Morgue.”
“I don’t get it. I thought he died in combat.”
“I need you to take a look, Ducky.”
“What do you expect me to find?”
“Nothing. We just need more time,” I explain while a smirk.

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“Great, thanks,” McGee says into his phone before hanging up and turning to Gibbs to report, “Boss, I tracked down the two witnesses who signed Petty Officer Dobbs’ will. Both were corpsmen he met in training. One’s stationed at GITMO, the other Coronado. Neither knew anything relevant.”
“Gibbs, Gibbs, Gibbs! Are we still on? Weekend at the spa if I come up with something really big? This is a piece of the plastic sheet that the victim’s body was wrapped in,” Abby exclaims while running into the squad room excitedly.
“Did you lift a print?” Gibbs ask her.
“Negatory.”
“Trace evidence?” I ask her.
“No. but this is a really big but. From analysis of the polymers and the resins, I tracked down the manufacturer. They’ve reworked their formula. It’s polyethylene, four mils thick. It’s more flexible and resistance to tearing.”
“What’s the point, Baby?” Gibbs ask her in confusion, she still hasn’t told us anything that would prove our soldier innocent.
“This is a brand new product, Gibbs. It’s only been on the market for four months.”
“Petty Officer Dobbs has been in Iraq for ten months. He couldn’t have put it there,” McGee releases.
“So can I make those reservations now? What’s the matter, Gibbs?” Abby ask him when he just looks more stressed not more.
“Emmy Poole,” McGee guesses as Gibbs phone begins ringing.
“Yeah, Gibbs. I’ll be right there,” Gibbs says into the phone.
“Emmy Poole knew about the locker and she had a key.”
“I was just going to go um… check on the old spectrometer,” Abby informs us before leaving to return to the lab.
“Assuming Petty Officer Dobbs is innocent, why did Nora Webb’s remains show up in his storage locker?”
“Someone was framing him?” McGee answer him in a question.
“Emmy Poole knew about the locker and she had a key.”
“She would have had to have gone there before the bones were discovered.”
“But after Petty Officer Dobbs died, so he couldn’t defend himself,” I add while pointing at McGee with the pen I picked up off Gibbs desk while they were talking.
“There’s one problem, boss. The computer shows that Dobbs’ entry access code was used only
once. The time she was with the manager. She could have used somebody else’s code! There’s a surveillance camera at the entry gate, boss.”
“I know, McGee,” Gibbs snaps at him. That is why I am going to Little Creek.”
“Avoid the two ninety five. It’s packed,” Tony offers while returning to his desk from somewhere.
“DiNozzo, go with McGee. He’s going to pick up the surveillance tape,” Gibbs orders Tony.
“Boss, I just… you’re driving,” Tony orders McGee while throwing him the keys to the car and leaving to the elevator.

“Abby, can you tell if anyone picked,” Gibbs begins while walking into the lab to see Abby working on the padlock and an unknown man working on one of her machines.
“Dobbs padlock?” Abby cuts him while finishing his question.
“Yes.”
“No.”
“Abs, I don’t have time.”
“I’m try to tell you I just checked it out. I knew you were going to ask. It’s scary, Gibbs. I’m starting to think like you.”
“So all you think about is coffee, catching Ari and getting married just to get divorced?” I ask her making her grin at me while Gibbs throws me an annoyed look.
“The lock is almost a virgin. It’s hardly been opened and it shows no sign of wear. If it had been picked, there’s be scratches on the tumbler.”
“It was opened with a key,” Gibbs translates what she was saying to English and not Abby-ish.
“I would swear to it.”
“That’s good work, Abs.”
“I knew you were going to say that, too,” Abby exclaims before Gibbs gives the unknown man a look asking who he was without words, “He’s the manufacturer’s service tech. he got triple time on weekends and it’s going to be a while.”
“Stay on his,” Gibbs orders as we leave the lab.

“Any luck with Emmy’s psychiatrist?” Gibbs ask Kate as we walk into the squad room.
“It’s Sunday, Gibbs,” Kate reminds him like that answers his question.
“I know. As everyone keeps reminding me.”
“Well, it wasn’t much of a challenge finding you. I actually so like to drink alone, but I figured you could use a pick-me-up. You’re not surprised I found you here?” Coleman says while handing Gibbs a coffee.
“No. no, why should I be? The investigation’s not over.”
“It’s a lost cause.”
“You here to gloat?” I snap at her in disgust, a hero is being withheld his medals because of an incompetent investigation from before he joined the army.
“Actually, I happen to believe in miracles.”
“Oh, really,” Gibbs says.
“Never had one happen in front of me. So I figure if one did, I’d like to be standing by so I can call the pentagon.”
“Well, Kate had a date with the same man twice last week,” I inform her making Kate glare at me for saying that is a miracle.
“Miracles take hard work, commander,” Gibbs informs her while ignoring my comment.
“Any particular desk I should use?” Coleman ask Gibbs.
“Special Agent DiNozzo will be gone for a while,” Gibbs informs her while leading her to Tony’s desk.
“Agent Todd?”
“Richfield case file,” Gibbs says while handing her the file.
“Do you realize at this exact moment we would be in the throes of deep-tissue exhilaration,” Abby
reminds us while bouncing into the squad room.
“Don’t remind me,” Kate and I beg of her, but I have more of a whine to my tone than Kate.
“You guys had spa plans?” Coleman ask us in surprise.
“Yeah,” Abby happily says.
“Last month a girlfriend and I went to the new one in Charleston.”
“Serenity Retreat?” Kate ask her.
“Ahh,” Kate and Abby says together while I shake my head at them.
“Are you here for a reason, Abby?” Gibbs snaps at Abby tiredly.
“I want to talk dirt,” Abby informs him.
“Can you not, it’s so dirt?” I ask her making her grin at me.
Boss!” McGee runs in happily while cutting of Abby’s answer.
Umm. I don’t know if you missed my lips moving, McGee, but actually I was speaking. According to my newly repaired mass spectrometer,” Abby begins again.
“Sorry, Abs, but this is big. Well, it could be big. At least we think it is. But if it is big, it would be real big!” Tony cuts Abby off this time.
“We reviewed the entry gates security tapes from little creek public storage. From the day petty officer Dobbs died to the day Nora Webb’s remains were found. No sign of Emmy Poole entering,” McGee reports.
“But I think I recognize someone else,” Tony adds.
“It’s grainy, but we’re hoping that Abby is capable of enhancing it,” McGee reports while holding up the tape.

“This video was taken three days after Petty Officer Dobbs died in Fallujah. This guy opened up a locker the same day, under the name of John Weston,” McGee reports while playing the video on the plasma screen in the lab.
“Freeze it right there!” Tony orders the two at the computer when the right car is at the gate.
“Any chance we make the driver, Bas?” Gibbs asks Abby.
“Not a chance, Gibbs. A certainty,” Abby informs us while running her program making us able to see who it is.
“Webb,” Gibbs and I hiss together.
“Were there any other surveillance cameras on the premises?” Coleman ask Abby.
“No. once he was in, he could have gone to any locker,” McGee reports.
“He would have to have known which locker was Dobbs’?” Kate reports to them.
“And he would have had to have had a key because the lock was not picked,” Abby informs her.
“Emmy Poole. Kate, McGee, start back-grounding Bruce Webb. DiNozzo, Alice, you’re with me!”
Gibbs orders us before we all turned to leave.
“Gibbs! Gibbs! My dirt!” Abby calls after us.
“What about it?” I ask her.
“Unless someone has been fertilizing the forest, Nora Webb was not buried in the woods. The soil found on her femur contained chemicals consistent with plant food,” Abby happily informs us making even Gibbs smile slightly.

Yeah, Gibbs,” Gibbs answer his ringing phone and puts it on speaker.
“Bruce Webb was Nora’s stepfather,” Kate reports.
“Her biological father walked out when she was three. Nora took his name when he officially adopted her at the age of six,” McGee adds.
“Nothing else yet but where working on it, Gibbs,” Kate promises before Gibbs hangs the phone up.
“Wow. Stepfather. Did you see that movie? Guy married a woman with a gorgeous daughter,” Tony rambles as we get out of the car and begin walking to the nursery.
“I thought I made it clear we have nothing to say to NCIS,” Bruce snaps as he rushes towards us.
“Tony,” Gibbs says making Tony show Bruce the photo of him from the camera.
“I know. Security video can be so darn unflattering,” Tony comments as Kathy walks out to us.
“What’s going on?” She demands of us looking years older than she is.
“By tomorrow we’ll have your fingerprints from the storage locker rental agreement. We’ll have a
search authorization, take soil samples from the nursery and match them against trace evidence from
Nora Webb’s remains,” I explain to Bruce.
“I don’t understand.”
“You dug up and you moved the body because you were afraid that the new owners of the nursery
would uncover it,” Gibbs informs Bruce.
“Bruce?” Kathy cries in fear and saddens.

Emmy Poole was an impressionable teenager, raised by a single mum. Look for a father figure,”
Gibbs says to Bruce while I sit next to him.
“It wasn’t like that,” Bruce snaps at us.
“What was it like, Mister Webb?” I ask him tightly.
“Emmy was always around with… with Nora. I enjoyed being with them. It was fun taking them
places. As they got older, Emmy was advanced. Sexually precocious. It all happened so gradual.
And then one day things got out of hand. I wanted to stop it but…”
“What happened that night?” Gibbs demands of the sicko in front of us.
“It was late. My wife was asleep. Emmy called and warned me that Nora had found out about us.
She was hysterical. She and Emmy had gotten into a fight at the party. Justin Dobbs didn’t know
what the fight was about. He offered to drive Nora home. I couldn’t let Nora tell her mother. I met
her out front and I tried to calm her. She started screaming. I just… I put my hand over her mouth.
She wouldn’t stop,” Bruce cries but I can’t buster any sympathy for him, he killed her over having
sex with her underage friend, “I didn’t mean to kill her.”

Do you want to take it from here, Chief?” Gibbs ask while turning to the two way mirror where
Coleman and Whalen is standing. We leave the integration room into the corridor where Coleman is.
I keep walking leaving Gibbs to talk to her because I really don’t like her, but that might just because
of how Gibbs acts around her.

“They found Tony’s car,” Kate informs us as we all walk into the squad room to see it on the plasma
screen. We all walk over and crowed around the plasma to watch the news, I feel Gibbs come to a
stop in my personal space, not that I am complaining.
“It’s on the I-Forty in Oklahoma,” McGee informs us as we watch it.
“Chopper John is live on the scene,” the reporter informs us.
“Pull it over! You’ll never get away!” Tony begs of the driver who can’t hear him.

Kind of drives like Gibbs,” Abby comments.
“Yeah, if it wasn’t live I would say we were watching a rerun of Gibbs getting coffee,” I agree with
Abby, as there is car tires screech as the drive speeds around one truck but lose control and hits
another truck. The car is completely gone.
“Holy cow!” the reporter shouts in surprise.
“Oh!” Abby says sadly.
“That’s harsh,” Gibbs comments
“Oh, my! Is that the driver?” the reporter ask while zooming in on someone who was thrown from
the car when it hit.
“Yes, it is, Gary. I can’t believe it. He seems to be moving. He somehow survived!” the copter pilot
informs the guy in the studio.
“The same cannot be said for the car, John. It’s been completely demolished.”
“Oh!” Abby says again when they zoom in on what is left of Tony’s car.
“Oh!” Kate agrees.

Have a good weekend,” Gibbs says to us while leaving the squad room.
“Tony!” Abby says to the man who hasn’t moved since the car hit.
“Tony, that sucks,” Kate agrees while we all get our stuff to leave but Tony is still frozen.
“Should I poke him with a stick?” I pretend whisper to Kate but Tony still doesn’t move.

“What do you want to do tonight?” Kate ask me as we walk into the apartment to see Ugly Tony the second laying on the couch sleeping.

“I think Ugly Tony has the right idea,” I say while picking up my rat thing. I’m still not sure it is a dog or a rat or a scientific experiment or an alien.

“I was so looking forward to this weekend,” Kate complains while flopping onto the couch where Tony was moments before.

“Well you know what they say Kate.”

“What’s that?”

“If you spend your whole life looking forward to something, you will miss your whole life.”

“Look at you sounding wise. So to bed,” Kate orders me while throwing a pillow at me.

“Do you think Gibbs would kill me if I brought Ugly Tony to work tomorrow?”

“Yes.”

“But she’s house broken. More than Tony and McGee anyway.”

“Doesn’t matter.”

“You are the worsted sister ever.”

“Good to know,” Kate say without reacting making me pout at that, and she heads to her room to catch up on sleep since we can’t go anywhere know, the weekend is over.

“We can have a spa weekend next week,” I promise Kate.

“If we’re not working,” Kate mumbles but I think we can do it.

“You right to go?” Abby bounces into the squad room the next Friday as we work on paper work for a cold case for the moment.

“Yeah, all done,” Kate answers her while turning her computer off and grabbing her bag to leave.

“Let’s go, before Gibbs returns with a case,” I say to them, making them both agree with me and leave the squad room into the elevator very quickly.

“Where is Tony?” Abby asks as we entry the elevator.

“Crying over his cry still,” Kate and I answer her together.

“That was funny.”

“I downloaded the footage off the internet to show him whenever he is being annoy. Or I feel like it,” I inform Abby happily as the elevator reaches ground leave and we walk out, and we almost walk into Gibbs.

“You girls off?” Gibbs ask us while stepping out of our way.

“Yep,” Abby happily says before adding, “You won’t call us back. You promised we get weekend at the spa?”

“Yes, I promised.”

“See you Monday,” We all say to him happily while leaving to Abby’s car to take it.
“Wow. What’d you do? Spend the night saki-bombing?” Tony asks Kate when he walks into the lab and sees that she looks like death warmed over.

“It’s a cold, Tony. Saki-bombing?” Kate asks him in confusion.

“Oh, come on, Kate. Don’t tell me you’ve never heard of saki-bombing?”

“Would I ask if... forget it. I don’t want to know.”

“You take a cup of hot saki. You drop it in a beer. You toss it back and... and KA-BOOM!” Tony explains while demonstrating with invisible gear.

“Saki-bombing,” I comment from behind Gibbs’ desk, working on his computer.

“Great for a cold,” Tony informs her.

“I’ll stick to honey and hot tea, thanks,” Kate says to him.

“McGee, Kate’s never been saki-bombing.”

“You know, I don’t think I have either.”

“I work with a pair of wankers,” Tony complains as Gibbs walks into the squad room.

“And you make three, DiNozzo.”

“Good morning, Boss.”

“Good morning,” Kate says to him right before sneezing into the tissue.

“Cold or flu?” Gibbs asks her while coming to a complete stop in front of Kate’s desk.

“Just plain cold. Don’t worry. I will sneeze into my tissues, unlike some people,” Kate promises before giving Tony a pointed look.

“I have allergies, Kate,” Tony defends himself.

“Never had allergies. Never had a cold,” Gibbs comments while moving over to his desk while I get out of the chair for him to sit down.

“You never had a cold?” Kate asks Gibbs in surprise.

“Nope. Never had the flu either,” Gibbs informs us while I sit on the edge of Tony’s desk.

“Why do I believe that?” Kate asks Tony and me in a whisper.

“If you were a bug, would you attack Gibbs?” Tony asks Kate while moving over to his desk.

“I get colds all the time,” McGee chimies him with something that no one is surprised by.

“Of course you do, probie.”

“Why does that not surprise me?” I overlap Tony.

“Alice wait about you?” McGee asks me.

“I get sick a lot. My lungs have been weakened since my birth,” I explain making Kate snort.

“I’m just glad you haven’t been hospitalized him the last three years,” Kate comments.

“Me too. I don’t like hospitals.”

“This one is just addressed to ‘NCIS Special Agent,’” McGee informs us while holding up a letter.

“I think that’s mine, McGee. Huh?” Tony says while snatching the letter.

“How do you know?”

“I recognize the lips. And the scent,” Tony informs us while showing us the envelope with a kiss in lipstick on the back to seal it.

“Gummy bears?” Kate laughs at Tony as he opens the letter and blows across the opening, only to blow white powered out of it and into my face making my sneeze. We all freeze for a moment before Gibbs jumps into action by jumping up onto his desk and whistling to get everyone near attention.

“We’ve opened a letter with white powder. Use the southeast corridor to the holding room. You all know the drill,” Gibbs calls out.

“Tony! Alice!” Kate exclaims while throwing us both a bottle of water each. We both grab a separate bin, Tony uses his own while I grab McGee, and place them on the desk to wash our head off before moving out to be decontaminated. Kate picks up her phone and says, “Letter opened in Special Agent Gibbs’ office dispersed a fine white powder. Initiating bio-attack procedures. Third floor evacuating.”
“McGee, are you up on procedures?”

“Yeah, we shower, burn our clothes, get blood tested. Nobody leaves the building until the substance is identified except,” McGee recites before turns to us.

“Luck us! We win a free trip to Bethesda to be pricked like a pin cushion,” Tony finishes for him.

“Kate you jinxed it. Now I have to return to the hospitals,” I whine in fear, I am afraid of hospitals because of the number of times I have been admitted. I then add, “Should have stayed behind Gibbs desk, away from the germs.”

“They’ve shut down the air. Let’s hit the showers, Tony!” Kate comments when the air cuts off.

“Thought you’d never ask. Sorry, boss,” Tony says while walking past Gibbs dripping water over the dirt.

“Not a good day and it’s only starting,” I complain while walking past Gibbs who just stand at her desk for a moment.

“Who would send me a letter with anthrax?” Tony asks us as we are in the shower meaning he has to ask over the running water.

“Pick a girl, Tony. Any girl,” Kate informs him while I scrub my hair with the soap to get the white substances off my body.

“It’s not funny, Kate.”

“We know. Trust me we know,” I hiss at Tony in fear, I am going to the hospital and I’m scared out of my mine.

“This is serious.”

“I know, Tony. I’m sorry,” Kate says sobering up as it sinks in that I am contaminated too.

“Thought you’d never ask. Sorry, boss,” Tony says while walking past Gibbs dripping water over the dirt.

“Yeah, that’s because your mother raised you to respect women, McGee,” Kate informs him.

“I know of Honey Dust,” I exclaim happily.

“Honey Dust?”

“Honey Dust. I give it to girls – women, sorry, Kate. I give it to women at Christmastime. Very sensuous. You apply it with a feather.”

“You don’t use the whole chicken?” Kate and I ask him sarcastically as I soap my face and then my back trying to get myself to feel clean.

“I never heard of Honey Dust,” McGee informs us.

“Yeah, that’s because your mother raised you to respect women, McGee,” Kate informs him.

“IT makes a women’s skin silky smooth. When kissed, tastes like honey. Got a box of Honey Dust last Christmas. No card,” Gibbs informs us.

“Aha, I think the post office screwed up, boss. Someone else got your bottle of Jack and you got the,” Tony exclaims.

“Hey! Doesn’t the post office irradiate our mail?” Kate asks us while cutting Tony off.

“Yeah, that’s right. All federal mail is funnelled through the Ion Beam facility in Bridgeport, New Jersey. If it has DNA, it dies,” McGee rambles about our poor mail, someone killed its friends.

“The diseases that you names, they have DNA?” Tony asks McGee happily.

“They do.”

“Aha, you should have let him squirm,” Kate complains.

“Ha ha! Then it’s no worries,” Tony exclaims happily but I’m not so sure, when are we ever that lucky?

“Unless the post office screwed up again,” Gibbs and I exclaim together, cutting Tony’s celebration off.
Gibbs pov
“You should have given the letter to me, McGee” I snap in anger as we wait in autopsy for the bus and bloods.
“I know, boss,” McGee exclaims.
“It’s not McGee’s fault. Tony snatched it out of his hand,” Kate defends McGee.
“So it’s my bad?” Tony asks.
“You blow white substance in my face,” Alice exclaims in anger and fear.
“You did grab it, Tony,” McGee exclaims at the same time.
“Lame excuse, Probie. You should have stopped me,” Tony exclaims as I try to leave autopsy.
“To find out who sent the letter,” I inform her while trying to leave still.
“Ah, ah, ah, ah. You cannot leave autopsy. It’s negative pressure so airborne pathogens can’t contaminate the rest of the building.”
“Ducky, I have been scrubbed, sanitized, for all I know, sterilized! I have an investigation to open!”
“I have a possible contagion to contain. Until your blood test clears you, I cannot permit you to leave this room,” Ducky informs us while the door slides open to let the paramedics in.
“Who opened the envelope?” the Paramedic demands of us while looking at all of us.
“He did,” Tony exclaims while pointing to McGee making the paramedic’s walk towards McGee who climbs onto a autopsy bed in fear.
“Just kidding. I’m your pin cushion,” Tony exclaims.
“Did you inhale any powder?” the paramedic ask.
“I might have. But she did,” Tony exclaims while pointing to Alice who looks ready to pass out in fear and making my anger spike, who in the hell put her life in danger, I am going to kill them. Slowly.
“We took blood. Jimmy?” Ducky informs them while getting Jimmy to hand the blood over, as I move over to where Alice is sitting on one of the autopsy bed and pulling her into a backwards hug to help her calm down.
Yeah. Four blood vials on ice to go,” Jimmy exclaims while handing the blood over as Kate sneezes.
“It’s a cold. I had it before I came in this morning,” Kate promises as everyone stares at her.
“I told you we should have taken the day off,” Alice jokes, badly.
“Which makes you even more susceptible to airborne pathogens. You should go in the hospital, too,” Ducky informs her slowly.
“Oh, no!” Kate exclaims in denial.
“Welcome to the party van. Dad won’t let us have alcohol,” Alice jokes again, but it is just showing me how scared she is just from her tone.
“Kate, play it safe. Go with Tony and Alice,” I order her while giving Alice one more squeeze before letting her get up and join the other two for the trip to the hospital.
“That’s safe? How long are we going to have to stay in isolation?” Kate asks in disbelief and worry.
“At least overnight,” the paramedic informs us.
“Can we have double bed because I hate it when you get that crease when you push the two,” Tony rambles making me hit him on the back of the head. Tony turns to me and says, “if I get anthrax, how will you feel?”
“Not as bad as you, DiNozzo,” I inform him start up as Alice whimpers in fear making me feel bad for reminding her what she might have to deal with in the coming hours.
“I’m scared Gibbs,” Alice whines in fear.
“It’s be alright. You’ll survive this. You have to kill Ari still,” I remind her softly while rubbing her arm. But when that doesn’t calm her down I pull her into a hug making her cling to me like a little child in fear of what is going to happen.
“Let’s go,” Paramedic orders them while getting ready to ship out to the hospital.
“I’m warning you, DiNozzo,” Kate points at Tony threaten.
“Yeah?” Tony asks without fear for the moment.
“I do not feel well.”
“You need to relax. You need a foot massage.”
“I don’t want you anywhere near my feet. I don’t want you touching my feet.”
“I don’t want him touching my sister, at all,” Alice cuts him while I move away from her to let her join her sister.
“You don’t feel well and,” Tony rambles as I watch my team leave the room to go to the hospital in the hopes of not being sick.
“So are you. Hoo! Talk to mama,” Abby says on the monitor with a direct feed to the lab as she does a cartwheel.
“I didn’t take you for the cheerleader type, Abby,” I call to her getting her attention while trying to not worry over my girl. No, not my girl, Alice. Alice.
“Oh, I’m not. Grammy taught me that. She was an Olympic swimmer. Won the silver in the two hundred meter butterfly,” Abby informs us while bouncing around behind her computer.
“What does swimming have to do with cartwheeling?” Jimmy asked in confusion.
“Nothing.”
“I don’t understand.”
“You can’t think logically with Abby. Her mind operates like a pachinko machine,” McGee informs Jimmy making me have to grind my teeth together so I don’t kill them.
“What was the powder, Abby?” I demand of her.
“White. With a hint of tan,” Abby informs me without answering my question.
“Abs!”
“Well, it’s all I know until my baby speaks to me. I’m auto-sampling for anthrax, botulism, plague, cholera, all those nasty little bio-buggers.”
“How long?”
“A couple hours.”
“I thought you said these tests were fast.”
“It’s not a pregnancy test, Gibbs.”

Alice pov
“You should drink more water,” Tony comments when Kate puts her yellow pee on the table with Tony and mine that is almost clear.
“Tony,” Kate hisses at him in surprise that he would even say something about her piss.
“Your urine’s too dark.”
“I have a cold. I can’t believe you’re commenting on my – eeugh!”
“Neither can I. Doctor Brad Pitt. Yes, it’s my real name and no we’re not related. I wish we were. I’d love to meet Angelina Jolie,” Doctor Pitt informs us while walking up to us after hearing Tony’s comments on Kate urine making Kate laugh at his joke while Tony and I roll our eyes, that was so cheesy and it worked on Kate.
“If I said what he said you would,” Tony begins when Doctor Pitt walks away but Kate elbows him making him finish airlessly, “Elbow me.” After Tony finishes speaking we follow the doctor to the isolation cube.
“Well, it’s not the four seasons, but let’s hope you’re not here long,” Doctor Pitt says while we walk into a room with a view into a room with glass walls and five beds in it with lights hanging above each one, with blue lights alighting the room.
“Negative pressure,” Kate asks the doctor when we are all blow with air before being allowed into the glass room.
“Mm-hmm. Air can flow in, but not out. I’d like you to meet Lieutenant Emma Ingham, your duty nurse for tonight,” Doctor Pitt says while introducing us to the nurse in the room prepping it for our arrival.
“Hi, guys. How are you?” Emma asks us.
“As a precaution, I’m starting your prophylaxis with streptomycin.”
“Prophylaxis is measure taken for the prevention of disease, Tony,” Kate explains to him. “That’s why I use them,” Tony comments flirtatiously making Emma laugh at him. “Oh, you don’t want to encourage him, lieutenant,” Kate informs her while I grip her hand in fear, because the more I look around the hospital room in fear of every time I’ve been in one ends badly. “Sorry. Um… take any bed you want, you guys,” Emma informs us. Making me quickly walk to the middle bed to claim as my own for the duration of our stay. “Thank you, Nurse Emma,” Tony says while taking the bed right next to Kate’s making it go, empty bed, empty bed, me, Tony, Kate. “But it’s prudent to keep some separation in case in case one of you has been infected,” Pitt informs us making Tony have to take the end bed making the order go, emptyTony, empty, me, empty, Kate. “Thank you, Doctor!” Kate say innocently with a big grin. “Brad. We’re informal here.” “Kate.” “Are these things sunlamps, Brad?” Tony ask while sticking his face next to the light. “UV kills the bacteria in the air, although I can arrange for a sunlamp if you wish.” “Oh, not for me. It’s for Kate.” “What?” Kate hiss at Tony in anger as he sits on his bed. “Yeah, a little nude sunbathing might get rid of those tan lines.” “Yeah, we don’t get tan lines. That’s the point of the spa weekend,” I explain to Tony making him freeze in surprise at what I just informed him. “Doctor, could you put him to sleep, please?” Kate begs the good looking doctor. “Bye nurse Emma,” Tony says as the two medical people leave the room. “Bye,” Emma says while leaving us alone with Tony, that’s scarier then what might be in my lungs.

Gibbs pov

“The water mark will tell where it was made when it was made, and who sold it. The person that sent this… may as well have signed it.”

“You know, there was a time when every young woman of breeding was taught calligraphy. My mother still tries, but her hand shake so that even I can read all her missives,” Ducky rambles.

“Can you read this missive, Ducky?” I snap at my friend.

“Oh, yes. It’s perfectly legible,” Ducky says before reading it with his lips moving without reading it out loud.

“Um… I think he means read it out load,” Abby informs Ducky.

“Oh, sorry. Of course. Uh,” Ducky says before reading the letter, “If you are reading this and have not initiated biological attack procedures, I suggest you do so immediately. Since the powder dispersed by opening this envelope contains genetically altered Y pestis.”

“Which is Latin for what?” I snap at him.

“Plague!”

“The powder in that envelope carries bubonic plague?” I ask them tightly releasing that my people, my Alice, is infected with the plague.

“Pneumonic is more likely.”

“There’s more than one?”

“Oh, there are three, actually. But pneumonic is by far the most dangerous since it can be spread simply by breathing the Y pestis particles.”

“Tony must have breathed in some of them. Alice defiantly did.”

“It may not be alive Y pestis needs a host or moisture for it to survive more than a few hours,” Abby informs me.

“Plus it was irradiated when it went through the mail, boss,” McGee reminds us.

“I got a Honey Dust for Christmas, McGee,” I remind him.

“I’ll narrow my test to pneumonic Y pestis. If I can isolate the strain, then Bethesda can hit it with a specific antibiotic,” Abby informs us while doing it.

“Yeah, well that may not help. It says here, ‘I have genetically altered the Y pestis to render it impervious to antimicrobials,’” Ducky reads to us making me anger grow at this person.

“That bitch! She created a strain that antibiotics can’t whack.”

“Ducky, give Bethesda a heads up. A Swak does not mean that this bitch couldn’t be a bastard!” I remind Abby after ordering Ducky.

“You’re so right, Gibbs. I have this friend who’s a transvestite. Her lips could outswak Angelina Jolie’s. Remember, McGee? You met her at my birthday party.”

“Yeah, the low-cut dress with a built-in plastic,” McGee begins while holding his hands where he breasts where before I hit him in the back of the head to get him to stop.

“I saw that, Gibbs.”

“Read, or you’ll feel it,” I inform her angry.

“Not while you’re down there.”

“What?”

“However, there is an antidote. She made a magic bullet. ‘Which if administered within thirty two hours of infection, will eradicate the disease. To procure the antidote, MCIS must make public the true results of reported in Dossier R-Zero Three Seven-seven.’”

“McGee, pull up the file,” I order McGee making him move to Ducky’s computer.

“Yep, Romeo zero three seven-seven. On it, boss,” McGee says.

“Is that it?”

“That’s all she wrote. It’s guided inside. I can see the Swak through – uh-oh. We have a moisture strip in here,” Abby informs us while pulling out the strip.

“Yeah, keeping the bug alive until the letter is opened.”

“I’m afraid so, Gibbs.”

“Check the cancelled stamp, Abs! one way to get around postal irradiation – to not use the post office.”

“I spoke with a Doctor Brad Pitt,” Ducky informs us while walking into the lab.
“You’re kidding,” Abby exclaims in surprise.  
“No, that’s his name. He made a point to stress that he is not related in any way to the actor.”  
“Hey, did you hear when Brad and Jen split up?”  
“Abby!” I snap at her in annoyance.  
“Gibbs, I can’t until I can put this under a microscope. And I can’t do that until NCID gives me approval to irradiate.”  
“Okay, which will be when?”  
“The navy is sending a sample to Atlanta. It should be there... well now. And then it’ll be twelve hours for DNA confirmation.”  
“Ducky, what’s the incubation period?”  
“A day at most,” Ducky answers me.  
“How long until it kills?”  
“Well, not very long, I’m afraid. In the fourteenth century, the novelist Boccaccio wrote that plague victims had lunch with their friend and dinner with their ancestors in paradise.”  
“McGee, where’s the file?”  
“Boss, I cannot access it from,” McGee begins complaining but I don’t care.  
“Ducky! We’re coming up!” I inform Ducky while cutting McGee off and leaving autopsy.  
“We’ve already been through this, Gibbs! You can’t!” Ducky calls after us.

Alice pov

“You know what this feels like?” Tony asked while snapping his fingers.  
“I’m afraid to ask,” Kate comments.  
“I’m afraid. So whatever Tony says can’t be worse,” I state while staring up at the light above me.  
“Like I’m the king of cool,” Tony informs us.  
“Elvis?” Kate asks him.  
“Elvis was the king of rock and roll. Travolta is the king of cool,” I correct my sister.  
“Well, thanks for the clarification.”  
“And do you know why I feel like Travolta?” Tony asks Kate.  
“I feel a movie coming on.”  
“The boy in the plastic bubble. Travolta plays this boy born with an immune deficiency. This is before AIDS. He lives in this giant plastic bubble.”  
“Tony. Tony, please. We’re stuck here together. Can we just make a pack? Until we’re out I won’t make fun of all the stupid things you say and you won’t tell me any more film scenarios. Deal?”  
“Deal.”  
“Thank you.”  
“Emma.”  
“Yes?” Emma asks him throw the intercom because she isn’t in the glass room.  
“You may find this of interest. You look pretty without the mask, by the way. Ralph Bellamy plays this doctor. Ralph Bellamy was this great old time actor. He was in ‘his girl Friday’ with Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell,” Tony rambles to Emma making Kate roll over and put her pillow over her head to mute him.

Gibbs pov

“He didn’t,” Abby informs Ducky as we walk into the lab in a biohazard suit, making us safe to walk around without endangering other people.  
“He left autopsy,” Ducky reminds her because he can’t see us.  
“But not isolation.”  
“McGee,” I call McGee making Ducky spin around to see us.  
“Yeah,” McGee asks in confusion.  
“You use Abby’s computer to access that case file!”  
On it.”  
“Okay. Abby, pull the surveillance videos from the squad room. Everything from twenty three
hundred last night when I left until McGee came in this morning,” I order Abby while pointing to her computer as McGee leaves into her back office to use the computer.

“You’ve got to get a live, Gibbs,” Abby says to me while opening the video.

“The last thing I need is another wife.”

“Life. You’ve got to get a life,” Abby signs and says to me with a grin.

“Boss! Boss, I found the file it’s a rape case,” McGee exclaims while running back into the front of the lab.

“Get the investigating agent down here,” I order him.

“I can’t. It was Pacci,” McGee informs me, making me remember him beginning found dead in an elevator while working a cold case.

“Pull it up on the plasma, McGee!” I order him.

“Okay!”

“Sarah Lowell. Age twenty one. Senior, Vassar. Raped February tenth, oh-one at the Admiral’s Bay Hotel in Annapolis,” I read off the case file that McGee finally puts it on the plasma.

“Surely you remember the case, Jethro. The maid found the poor girl naked, tied to the bed two days after she was raped,” Ducky reminds us.

“Duck, contact Cassie Yates in Norfolk. Tell her what happened. I need her help.”

“Yeah, good idea.”

Gibbs! I thought Cassie was working narcotics suppression,” Abby informs me with words and signing after tapping my shoulder to get my attention.

“Four years ago Cassie was Pacci’s probie,” I inform her.

“Oh.”

“The victim was visiting Annapolis to register for an advanced study program at Saint John’s. Police had the case for three days before they called us in.”

“They found a Navy suspect?”

“A dozen of them. Firsties were partying at the hotel the night of assault.”

“Firsties?”

“Academy seniors. They’d just got their fleet assignments and… are you scanning?”

“Gibbs, I can multitask! I can listen to you. I can scan the video. I can rub my tummy and…”

“DNA testing vleared them, closed our investigation.”

“But someone wants it reopened.”

“McGee! Call Annapolis PD I want their file on this case.”

“I spoke to Cassie. She remembers the case. She’ll be here in fifteen minutes,” Ducky reports to us while returning to the lab after leaving for a moment of privacy.

“From Norfolk?”

“No, Anacostia. She’s working a drug sting.”

“Boss. Boss, I can’t call. They’re not going to be able to hear me,” McGee exclaims but I just glare at him making him finish, “I’m going to use the computer.”

“Gibbs! Look who else doesn’t have a life. Tony came back around midnight,” Abby laughs while showing us the video.

“He does his best work at night,” I state.

“She he tells us. Here’s tony leaving. That’s Ben the mail-boy. He didn’t do it.”

“Why not?”

“He’s a Vegan.”

“Hitler was a Vegan.”

“Hitler was a vegetarian. Bug difference. Vegan are so against cruelty they won’t even use cosmetics tested on animals.”

“Abigail, could Y pestis be altered to withstand irradiation?” Ducky asks Abby while looking at the envelope.

“No way. Altered or not, it’s still a living organism.”

“Could the gilding in the envelope protect it?” I ask her.

“It would have to be at least ten mils thick. This is barely one. Uh-oh.”
“Abby, I do not want to hear any more uh-ohs.”
“Sorry. But this swak didn’t bleed through. There’s another one inside.”
“Get that letter out here where you can examine it!”
“Gibbs, I’ve told you! I have to wait for Atlanta to…”
“Any doubt it’s pneumonic plague?”
“No, but…”
“Then no ‘butts!’ okay? We’re losing time. Kill those bugs! Now!”

Alice pov

“Think they really zap bugs?” Tony asks while looking at the light hanging above our heads that night after waiting all day in the hospital.
“What?” Kate asks in confusion because she was laying away from him.
“These blue lights.”
“Are you serious?”
“Ever heard of a placebo, Kate?”
“Tony, placebos are administered for a psychological effect.”
“Precisely. How do you know these lamps aren’t there to make us think they’re helping? Hmm?”
“Maybe because they’re there to kill whatever bugs we breathe into the air,” I explain to him while laying further back into my bed and reading the book the nurse gave me to pass the time.
“You may have a point.”
“You’re afraid, aren’t you?” Kate asks him because she knows I am terrified.
“Kate, come on. Me? Afraid? Have you ever seen me afraid?”
“Well, not when the danger is something that we can confront. But all we can do here is lie around and hope that we’re not infected.”
“Now who’s afraid?” Tony mocks Kate while giving her a grin.
“Anyone with half a brain,” I state.
“You may have a point.”

Gibbs pov

“Damn it, Abby! How much longer?” I exclaim in anger, it is taking too long and Tony, Kate and Alice might be dying.
“Gibbs! Patience is not your virtue, is it? Look at the plasma,” Abby orders me.
“Mouldy bread.”
“It’s a Y pestis microbe from the powder in the letter. This is the Y pestis as the human race had known it for a half a millennium. The strain of plague we fight with antibiotics.”
“The one in the letter has blue tips.”
“It’s been genetically altered to resist antibiotics. You catch that, you’re stuck in the Dark Age, which personally I wouldn’t mind until it killed me.”
“This wasn’t whipped up in your local meth house.”
“No, this took a hot molecular biologist and a big-buck lab to make this bio-weapon. Oh, my baby’s calling. I ran a mass spec on the swak.”
“You’re analysing lipstick instead of the letter?”
“Well, I figured anyone who’s into calligraphy has got to wear esoteric lipstick. And since all lipsticks are tested by the FDA…”
“You’ll identify the brand.”
“Yeah. If it’s as rare as I think it is, I can find out who sold it.”
“Yeah, that’s good thinking, Abs.”
“What?”
“Good thinking, Bas,” I yell so she can hear from me.
“I don’t know, Gibbs! I can’t hear you! It must be the helmet head!” Abby exclaims making me insult her in sign language making exclaim, “Not nice, Gibbs. Not nice. This is weird. All the basics are there – wax, oil, eosin dye, titanium dioxide, but they’re in such low levels,” Abby shouts at me.
as her computer beeps making her exclaim, “Whoa!”
“What is that?!” I ask while looking at the huge spike on the graph of chemicals.
“The reason the Y pestis survived postal irradiation. Seventy two percent of the lipstick is pure lead. A lead swak on the outside of the envelope. Lead swak in the inside. In between Y pestis on a moisture pad. This is one smart bitch.”
“Wash your mouth out with purple soap,” Cassie says while walking into the lab still in her undercover clothing.
“Cassie! Wow, are you suppressing drugs or selling them?”
“I’m working undercover. Everything I’m wearing is confiscated even the La Perla underwear.”
“Nice.”
“Gibbs! Is that you playing Tella Tubby? Is this the anthrax letter?” Cassie ask when she sees the big blue thing I am wearing.
“No, it’s not anthrax. It’s plague.”
“Thank god. Anthrax scares the hell out of me. May I?”
“Yeah.”
I know this return address.”
“Back-tracked it to the admiral’s boy hotel, Annapolis, where the girl was raped.”
“Gibbs! Gibbs, all the blood tests came back negative except,” Ducky exclaims while running into the lab.
“Tony and Alice,” I state sadly, my girl is sick and scared and haven’t found who did this yet. I continue while pulling out the suit, “Get it off.” Once the suit is off my top half, hanging around my waste I ask him, “Are they sick yet?”
“Well, not outwardly. But the doctor says their temperature is elevating. The Y pestis is attacking their pulmonary system. Hi Cassie.”
“Hey Ducky. How far are we into this thirty-two hour window?” Cassie asked the good ME.
“Too far. Tony and Alice while begin coughing soon. When their sputum becomes bloody, they’ll only have a few hours to live.”
“Abby, get that damn letter out of there!” I order her angry because this bitch is killing my girl and I never told her I liked her.
“I’m getting it,” Abby promises while finally getting the letter out.
“This is too easy, Gibbs. Custom paper and calligraphy that’s traceable. A gene-altering bio-attach,” Cassie says while saying what we are all thinking.
“Do you know who sent it?” I asked her without commenting.
“No, but I know who they want us to think sent it.”
“Bedtime snack, Brad?” Tony ask the doctor while they put a drip into each of our arms.
“Oh, IV drip increases the efficacy of streptomycin,” Pitt informs him while putting the IV in his arm.
“They teach you efficacy at Harvard Medical?”
“Michigan.”
“Can’t be. It’s woo weird.”
“What, are you a Wolverine, too?”
“Buckeye!”
“Wait, you’re that DiNozzo?”
“Yeah.”
“Ninety-two. Columbus!”
“We kissed our sisters.”
“Thirteen-thirteen tie. You broke your leg in the fourth quarter.”
“You broke my leg in the fourth quarter,” Tony corrects him while Kate and I roll our eyes.
“Oh, god. They’re going to start bonging beers next,” Kate complains to Emma.
“I don’t think so,” Emma attempts to say so.
“Oh, you don’t know Tony. He epitomizes sophomoric,” I explain to the nurse while jumping over to the bed next to Kate to talk to them while pulling my shirt up over my face so we don’t cross contaminate each other.

“His blood came back positive.”

“Positive?” Kate ask in confusion.

“You’re okay,” Emma informs Kate before turning to me and saying, “I’m sorry. But you’re infected too.”

“I’m positive?” I ask her in surprise, I was hoping that it was not infected.

“Alice. Oh my god,” Kate mumbles while looking at me as I become pale, I don’t want to be sick.

“How long until I die?”

“It all depends on your body,” Emma explain without giving me a time line.

“So I’m going to die,” I mumble while thinking about all the things I while never get to do, like tell Gibbs I like him, have a family, kill Ari, or see Gibbs again. Does Gibbs even know that I’m sick yet or is he still waiting for the results?

“So you didn’t feel like an old man on spring break?” Pitt ask Tony making me look at him.

“Well that leaves me out.”

“So tell me, doc. What have I got?”

“Pneumonic plague.”

“Plague?” Tony ask but when no one laughs or say it is a joke he says, “Plague.”

“Yeah, Tony. Plague! Because only you would go off and get a disease from the dark ages!” Kate hisses at Tony while walking over to him.

“I didn’t put the plague in the letter.”

“You opened it!” I remind him in fear.

“Yeah, so I opened it. What are you so upset about? It’s not like you’re lying…”

“Yeah, that’s right, Travolta. We’re infected, too,” Kate informs him while lying about being infected herself but not about me.

“Oh, Kate, Alice. I’m sorry.”

“Well, you going to be sorrier.”

“No, don’t tell me Gibbs got it.”

“Oh, no, no. just us. But I am going to make your life hell.”

“And then you die, painfully,” I inform him.

“How, it can’t be worse than the plague,” Tony attempts to say but Kate glares at him making him add, “Maybe it can. He then turns to Pitt and says, “Maybe she can.”

“I’m warning you, DiNozzo,” Kate informs him.

“You know, I recall a couple of plague flicks.”

“I’m going to tell Emma all of your dating tricks.”

“Mmm, Flash and Blood comes to mind. Paul Verhoeven directed. Rutger Hauer starred.”

“Tony thinks that speaking Italian turns women on.”

“Obviously you never saw Jamie Lee Kurtis in a Fish Called Wanda.”

“Kate,” Pitt begins.

“I know. You want to start my IV,” Kate cuts him off before sneezing, while we all return to our bed and get our IV’s in finally.

“If I catch your cold I’m going to be very pissed,” Tony calls after Kate before turning to Pitt, “they’ll be okay, right?”

Gibbs pov

“Hey McGee,” I say while walking into the inner lab where McGee is working on the computer.

“Yeah,” McGee ask without looking up from the computer.

“Special Agent Yates needs your computer.”

“Cassie!” McGee exclaims while turning to his ‘friend.’
“Hey, McGee. Can I sit in?” Cassie ask him while pointing to the computer.
“Yeah, sure. Boss, Cassie and I had parking spaces next to each other at Norfolk.”
“Why are you yelling at me, McGee?” I demand of him in annoyance.
“So you can hear me through your hel,” McGee begins before turning to me and see I’m not wearing the suit anymore, making him finish, “Helmet.”
“The blood tests were negative,” I explain making McGee take his suit off.
“Ah, sweet.”
“Not for DiNozzo. Or Alice.”
“Positive? Are they going to be okay?”
“If they’re not, they’ll be answering to me,” I explain while Cassie works on the computer making it beep rapidly.
“Almost there,” Cassie exclaims without looking at us.
“Ah, no. Cassie, I already downloaded the NCIS report from the rape investigation,” McGee explains to the other agent.
“My notes are in my training file. I was only a probie, but Pacci had me interview Sarah.”
“Oh, yeah. You’re a female, about the same age. Easier to talk to you than it is to a male agent,” I explain to her.
“It didn’t help. She didn’t remember a thing. Traumatic amnesia. Not unusual for rape case.”
“She had amnesia, who accused the Midshipman?”
“Her mother. Recognize her?” Cassie ask while pulling the photo of the mother up on the plasma in the outer lab after we walked out there.
“Vaguely familiar,” Ducky answers her.
“How about in this photo?” Cassie ask while pulling up another photo.
“Good god yes. That photo was on every front page in the world. She was more famous than Hanoi Jane.”
“Blow that up. Get closer on the headband,” I order them.
“My god, that’s a swak!” Cassie exclaims while looking at the swak on the head band after zooming in.
”She a microbiologist?”
“No, but the best in the world work for her. Hanna’s CEO of Lowell Pharmaceuticals.”
“McGee, I want a search warrant!”
“On it, boss.”
“I’ll grab a change of clothes and will meet you downstairs in five. Go to Bethesda and keep me updated on Tony and Alice’s condition.”
“Of course,” Ducky promises.
“Find out why Kate hasn’t checked in!”
“You got it,” Ducky exclaims while leaving to find out what happened to Kate and check on my sick team members.
“I go the phones, but they wouldn’t trust me with the weapon,” Jimmy exclaims while walking in with our phones.
“I wouldn’t either, Jimmy,” I state while taking a random phone to use.
“Un, that’s agent DiNozzo’s cell phone, sir. Gibbs?” Jimmy calls after me while I get into the elevator, worrying about Alice, is she showing symptoms yet. Is she okay, while we cure her because it’s too late?”

Alice pov
“Kate, I’m scared,” I almost cry to my sister while trying to stop myself from climbing into her bed like a sick child.
“You’ve got nothing to be afraid of, you’ll be fine,” Kate promises me while walking over to my bed with her IV and climbed into my bed to hold me tightly.
“What if I die here? I never got to do somethings,” I ask her while I bury my head in-between her Kate shoulder and neck in fear.
“You’ll bet this, and live your life. I promise,” Kate promise me something she can never keep as Pitt walks over to us.

“Why are you doing this, Kate?” Pitt ask her while trying to ignore me for the moment.

“Because my sister is sick and I never leave her when she is hospitalized. So I’m doing it. You’re not going to tell Tony.”

“Well, I’ve already informed Doctor Mallard you’re not infected.”

“Ducky will understand. Gibbs will be the problem.”

“No. the problem is that Alice or Tony can infect you,” Pitt explains while I begin coughing into a tissue off the table next to me bed that Emma has given to all of us earlier.

“What with all the UV lights and air scrubbers, or are they just here for patient morale?”

“I cannot permit you to stay. This strain has been genetically altered to resist antibiotics. Do you realize what that means?”

“That the IV in our arm is useless. Just giving us hope that we’re not going to die,” I state making Pitt give me a sad look.

“So why do it?” Kate ask the doctor.

“Well, it can’t hurt. And it gives them,” Pitt begins.

“Hope,” Kate cuts him off.

“Kate, tell Doctor Brad about that wet t-shirt contest you won,” Tony calls over to us while I cough again.

“Tell Emma about the transsexual you tongue.”

“That never happened,” Tony denies quickly while flicking his head to look at Emma so she understands him making Emma laugh making Tony say, “That never happen.” But that just sent him into a coughing fit, “Thanks for passing along the cold, Kate.”

Gibbs pov

“How do you want to handle this?” Cassie ask me while we walk into the building lobby for the bitch who poisoned my girl.

“Subtle approach. You serve the warrant. I’ll shove my sig in her face,” I inform her.

“Gibbs, Hanna Lowell has been arrested at more protests than Jesse Jackson. She won’t be intimidated.”

“Okay, then I’ll shoot her and I’ll go after whoever made the damn bug for her.”

“You’re not going to kill her.”

“I said shoot, not kill.”

“There are dozens of microbiologists here. It would take days to interrogate them. Tony and Alice doesn’t have days.”

“Do you know where her office is or should I ask the receptionist?”

“Boss always has the top floor office.”

“Excuse me. Excuse me. You have to check-in with the receptionist. Do you have an appointment?” a Guard calls to us.

“No. we have a federal warrant,” I informs him.

“Security alert.”

“I left enough cookie crumbs,” Hannah exclaims while we walk into her office.

“You left more than cookie crumbs, lady,” I state angry.

“I regret I resorted to such a dramatic act, but you people at NCIS left me no choice when you lied to protect the Academy. Now, you admit that a Midshipman raped my daughter and this will all be over.”

“The DNA cleared,” Cassie explains to the mother but Hannah cuts her off.

“Oh, stop it. I know how easy it is to dope a DNA test.”

“You love dramatic acts,” I state.

“They can be very effective.”

“The effect of this one is going to imprison you for life.”
“That long, hmm?”
“You’re dying.”
“Rather rapidly. Which makes incarceration highly unlikely.”
“From the looks of it you want to protect just about every living thing on the planet except for Federal agent.”
“My daughter never recovered from the horror of that weekend. The truth will help her heal. Please! Please, give it to her. you won’t get that antidote until that midshipman comes...”
“We don’t need it. The post office went postal on your plaque. Capped it right through the lead swak. No one was infected,” I lie throw my teeth while trying not to think of who is really dying in the hospital.
Oh, I don’t believe you.”
“I don’t give a damn whether you believe me or not. You are under arrest for a biological attack on a Federal agency. Take her to interrogation. I’ll wait here for the task force to arrest the others.
“You have the right to remain silent. If you give up that right,” Cassie begins reading her, her rights while cuffing her and leading her away.
“There are no others. I acted alone,” Hannah yells out me.
“You are not a microbiologist,” I reminds her.
“I stole the U pestis! Doctor Pandy doesn’t even know it’s missing,” Hannah shouts at me making me run into the outer off and calling to her receptionist.
“Doctor Pandy!” I demand of her.
What?” The receptionist ask in confusion.
“Where’s Doctor Pandy’s lab.”
“North wing, ground floor, B-L-Alpha. But you need authorization to enter the North wing!”
“Someone was infected. I hope it was Westmoreland,” Hannah exclaims as I take off to the north wing.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Alice pov
“Lay back, Tony. All right everybody behind the shield. Tony, I’m going to need you to take a deep breath and hold it,” Doctor Pitt says to Tony while Tony and I can barely stop coughing.
“I don’t think I can, Brad. Maybe Emma can do it for me. You have very healthy lungs, Emma,” Tony ask while trying to breathe in.
“Is he always like this?” Emma ask Kate.
“Unfortunately. Tony’s humour has always been sexist, juvenile, raunchy,” Kate answers her while I cough up some blood.
“Funny?”
“Oh, sometimes he can be funny.”
“Guys,” I call to them making everyone look over at me to see the tissue I hold up with blood on it before falling into another coughing fit, as Tony does the same thing across the room.
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Gibbs pov
“There is no antidote. I developed a vaccine, not an antidote. It’s of no use once the victim is infected. Hannah misunderstood,” Pandy explains while I have my gun to the glass while holding the security guard as hostage.
“She understood,” I exclaim angry.
“No, it’s the brain tumour.”
“That’s what’s killing her?”
“It inoperable, obviously affecting her mind. Why else would a women who fought to ban biological weapon use them?”
“I don’t know. Why is Lowell Pharmaceutical making them?”
“We’re not.”
“You didn’t create this beast?”
“Yes! But only to develop a defence against it. Antibiotic resistant diseases are potential terrorist
weapon."
“A terrorist isn’t killing my agents, you are!”
“I understand your anger.”
“No, you font! But if you don’t save them, you will.”
“It has a suicide gene that stops it from replicating after thirty two hours… as a security precaution.”
“It dies?” I ask while lowing the gun and releasing the guard finally.
“Yes.”
“It’s dead now?”
“If it’s over thirty two hours since the specimen has been infected, all of the Y pestis is dead. However, the damage will have been done.”
“The specimen is going to die?” I demand of him while raising the gun again.
“No, no, not necessarily. They has the same chance of survival as those infected in plagues in the past, probably better since they will be healthy and young.”
“What was the survival rate of the past?”
“People were weakened by depleted crops, bad nutrition…”
“Damn it! What was the survival rate?!”
“Fifteen percent.”

Alice pov
“I’m sorry I teased you with all those movies, Kate,” Tony apologies to Kate breathlessly between coughing fits where we are coughing up blood that needs wiping from our blue lips.
“Teased? You’ve tortured me. For two years all I’ve heard is John Wayne and Clint Eastwood, James Bond,” Kate informs him from behind her surgical mask.
“James bod… is a character… played by Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, and Piece Brosnan. Why are you wearing a mask?” Tony ask before sending himself into a coughing fit.
“Because I have a cold.”
“Why aren’t you sick?”
“Because I’m stronger than you two, Tony.”
“Are not.”
“Am too,” Kate argues with Tony right before I begin chocking and gaging, unable to get air in. Making Tony and Kate look at me and Kate yell, “Alice! Alice! Sit up!” As she yells at me Tony begins chocking.
“Kate, you should leave. Now!” Pitt orders Kate while I panic, I can’t breath and now my sister is leaving me. Why can’t she stay?
Kate pov
“You were brave to stay with them, Kate,” Ducky say to me as I remove my mask while I begin crying.
“Their dying, Ducky,” I cry while Ducky pulls me into a hug while looking at his daughter who is dying and he doesn’t even know her very well.
“Ahh, the hell they are!” Gibbs exclaim while walking into the room behind us.
Gibbs pov
“Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, who is the hell are you?” Pitt demands of me while I walk throw the decontamination without turning it on or grabbing a mask to keep me safe.
“Their boss. The bug has a suicide gene. It’s dead. It’s been dead for over an hour. He’s no longer infectious,” I explain while walking over to Tony first and lean over his sleeping body. He is pale with blue lips and nails, basically he looks like death warmed over. I whisper to him, “Tony, listen to me. Are you listening?”
“I’m listening. I’m listening, boss,” Tony gasps weakly to me.
“You will not die, you got that?” I ask him but when he falls to answer I ask again, “I said, you will not die.” But when he falls asleep I gently hit the back of his head.
“Ohay, I got you, boss.”
“Good. It’s your new cell. I’d get the number changed. Women keep calling for spankie.”
“Spankie,” Tony mumbles as I get up from my spot and move over to Alice who looks just as sickly as Tony.
“Alice, baby,” I whisper to her before taping her face until she wakes up.
“Gibbs,” Alice gasp out before coughing a bit.
“You’ll be fine. It had a suicide gene.”
“I’m scared.”
“I know, I know. We got her,” I inform her in a whisper before taking her sickly hand.
“I’m not dead?”
“No, you’re not dead. And you won’t die.”
“My chest hurts.”
“It’s okay, it’ll get better. Sleep.”
“I don’t want to be alone.”
“Kate and Ducky’s just outside. I’ll be back,” I promise her before giving her a gentle kiss on her forehead. I leave the room and walk to the waiting room to go back to the squad room but find Cassie here.
“How’s Tony? Alice?” Cassie ask me while walking up to me.
“Oh, Hanna lost it in the car. Started rambling, flashing peace signs. When she bared her breasts and shouted ‘make love not war!’ I drove straight here.”
“Sure it wasn’t an act?”
“Her neurologist says it’s the tumour. He just left. He wants her released into his care.”
“Not likely. He can see her here as much as he wants. Is that Sarah?”
“Just as blank as four years ago,” Cassie informs me before leading me to the young lady and sitting across from her, “Sarah, this is Special agent Gibbs.”
“I am so sorry. I can’t believe this. I knew someday Mother would do something terrible. I told her, but she wouldn’t believe me,” Sarah informs us but that just confuses me.
“Told her?” I ask her softly, but I wish Alice was here she would be able to get her to talk and feel safe about it.
“That it wasn’t a midshipman.”
“So you remember who assaulted you?”
“No!”
“How do you know it wasn’t a midshipman?”
“I… heard they were cleared.”
“Are you sure you don’t remember?”
“Yes,” Sarah says after a long moment of silence.
“You know who raped up, don’t you, Sarah? Cassie asks her softly but when she doesn’t say anything, “Sarah?”
“I wasn’t raped. Will thought it was funny… tying me to the bed. I’d said that the midshipman looked cute in their uniform. And so when he went out to get us some burgers and shakes, he tied me up so that why I wouldn’t run off with one of them. It was a joke! And then when he didn’t come back… I started going crazy – first worrying about why and then… and then being found,” Sarah cries.
“What happened to him?”
“He was killed by a hit-and-run driver crossing the road.”
“Why did you say you were raped?”
“I was tied named to a bed. What else could I tell my mother?”

Kate pov
“Can I sleep here?” I ask the doctor while looking into the room where Alice and Tony is.
“As long as you don’t give Tony that cold,” Pitt informs me making me grin before walking into the glass room where I almost watched my sister and co-worker die moments earlier.
“He’s asleep,” Emma informs me while I walk over to my sister to see she is asleep too.
“Thank you,” I say to her.
“This reminds me of the end of alien,” Tony comments after Emma turns the lights off making me laugh.

Alice pov

“Kate,” I whisper breathlessly when I feel someone moving some of my hair out of my face.
“Guess again,” Gibbs whispers to me making my eyes snap open to see him sitting next to my bed.
“Gibbs.”
“How are you feeling?”
“Tired…. Sore… Breathless. Like death… warmed over. Where’s… Kate?”
“I sent her home for a shower. She’ll be back.”
“Promise?” I ask while weakly holding my pinkie out for him to pinkie promise.
“Promise,” Gibbs says while wrapping his finger around mine.
“And then I can go home?”
“Not yet. You have to get better first.”
“I don’t like hospitals.”
“Me neither.”
“My chest really hurts,” I mumble while rubbing it in the hopes of relieving the pain.
“That’s ‘cause your lungs are very damaged. It’ll get better in time.”
“Oh.”
“Go back to sleep. It’s help.”
“I’m thirsty,” I whine making Gibbs give me a small smile before grabbing the cup from beside my tissues and holding the straw to my mouth so I can drink it.
“There you go.”
“Thank you. When while I go to a normal room?”
“Later today. No sleep,” Gibbs softly orders me while rubbing my hair which puts me straight to sleep even knowing I want to continue talking to him.
The next time I wake up, it was dark outside the window in the room I am in, a normal hospital room.
“I never,” Ducky rambles about a story but I never heard the beginning of.
“Ducky?” I cut him off softly but he heard none the less.
“Alice, you’re awake. How are you?”
“Death warmed over. Where is Kate?”
“She went to check on Tony.”
“How is he?”
“Same as you. I just came from him.”
“I’m scared. While we get better?”
“It’ll take time, but yeah, your lungs with recover eventually.”
“I hope so. I’m too young to sound like an old person,” I joke breathlessly. Before asking him, “Can we talk about something else? Pretend I didn’t just almost die.”
“I told mother that I have a grown up daughter.”
“How did… she take… that?”
“Better than I thought she would. We should set up a meet, but remember she has Alzheimer so she forgets things.”
“That’s alright,” I mumble while falling back to sleep again.

The next time I wake up again it is daylight outside, and Kate is finally back at my bedside.
“Kate,” I gasp throw the breathing mask I am wearing.
“Alice, how are you feel?” Kate ask me while standing up out of her chair to stand over me.
“If one more… person asked me that… I’ll bite them.”
“I’ll make sure Gibbs the next person,” Kate jokes while sitting next to me on the bed.
“Kate… I’m sick, you have to be nice to me.”
“That’s why I’m giving you a way to bite Gibbs.”
“Kate,” I whine at her softly making her laugh. I continue, “I’m hungry, and my chest hurts.”
“I’ll see if you’re allowed to eat,” Kate whispers to me while leaving the room to find me food.
After getting me food, Kate has to return to the office for work today.

“Hey,” Gibbs whispers to me while walking into the hospital room where I am staying, it is mid-afternoon.
“Hey,” I mumble tiredly.
“Hungry?” Gibbs ask while holding up a takeaway bag of food.
“Yes, hospital food is designed to kill the patient,” I explain to Gibbs while he hands me a bag of hot chips.
“I’d believe that,” Gibbs laughs while grabbing out his burger to eat himself. We eat in silence while he sits down on the edge of my bed.
“Gibbs, can I tell you a secret, but you have to promise not to hate me or not being my friend anymore.”
“I promise,” Gibbs promises while giving me, his full attention.
“I like someone but he doesn’t now and I don’t think he likes me back,” I mumble but he heard me.
“Well, just tell him.”
“How do you word a bomb shell like that?”
“How do you word a bombshell like that?” I ask Gibbs in confusion before coughing into the tissue I have next to my bed on the rolling table.

“Just go with it. No point dragging it out for both parties,” Gibbs explains to me while a pang of pain from the fact I like someone and it’s more than likely not him, because he is too old.

“Okay, Gibbs when I thought I was going to die, I begun thinking. Thinking about what I want, and how I never told my crush I like him,” I begin but I don’t know how to finish my confession because I don’t have the words. I don’t know how to make him understand what my feelings are, so I decide the best thing to do is use actions because actions are better than words anywhere. I hesitate for just a moment before lowering my oxygen mask and lunge forward, planting my lips on Gibbs in a kiss. When he doesn’t return the kiss or do anything I begin to pull away until our lips are not touching anymore, and I stutter out, “I’m sorry. Sorry, I’m sorry, so sorry. I didn’t mean to, I am just sorry,” I turn my back to Gibbs, because he didn’t like me that way. Abby was wrong.

Gibbs pov

‘Alice kissed me, Alice liked me. Alice kissed me, Alice liked me,’ that is all I am think to the point that I didn’t react to her kissing me but I did react when she begins apologize for kissing me and liking me.

I release that Alice is no turned away from me, making me feel like an old idiot, she likes and I made her doubt herself, this is not going to happen on my watch every.

“Alice,” I whisper while placing my hand on her back to get her to look at me but she just moves away from my hand and almost falls off the bed. But I try again, “Alice, baby,” I whisper but I release she is crying and gasping for air together because she isn’t wearing her oxygen mask. I pick the mask up from where she put it beside me when she kissed me. I lean over her so I can see her pretty face and placed the mask over her face to help her breathe. Once she has catch her breath I whisper in her ear, “Alice. Do you like me?”

“You don’t have to pretend to care. You can leave, just please don’t stop being my friend,” Alice cries into her pillow.

“I’m not going to stop being your friend,” I promise while rubbing her back before adding, “Come on turn around and we’ll talk this out.”

“What is there to talk about?” Alice mumbles while doing as I told her. She sits down on the bed while facing me.

“Alice. Do you like me, more than a friend?” I ask her softly, she looks so scared of this conversation and what can come from it.

“I have always liked you more than a friend,” she whispers sadly like that is a crime or sin.

“Why are you telling me this now?”

“I almost died and all I could think about was that I never told you.”

“Can I tell you a secret?” I ask her making her node slowly before I continue, “I like you too. I couldn’t let you die without you knowing that.”

“Really?”

“I promise. I just didn’t think you’d like me back,” I whisper to her while gently rubbing the tears from her checks. “Come here,” I say to her while pulling her into my arms for a hug.

“You like me,” Alice mumbles into my chest making me laugh.

“Yeah, I like you,” I agree with her while kissing the top of her head. I can’t believe that she likes me, I whisper to her, “Alice, baby, do you want to be my girlfriend?”

“I would like that,” Alice mumbles while hugging me tighter, but I gently pull away from her and remove her mask to plant a kiss on her lips this time. We both kiss, neither of us in shock this time and kiss back with equal pressure and feelings. I gently nip her bottom lip to make her open up to deepen the kiss, and she does with a gasp of surprise but I use that moment to slip my tongue into her mouth. As the kiss begins getting heated I hear a click and a gasp behind us making me end the kiss.
to look over my shoulder to see Kate and Abby standing there, Abby is holding a camera while Kate is standing there is obvious shock.

“Yes. Yes. Yes,” Abby exclaims while jumping in happiness.

“Abby,” Alice gasp out before gasping for air again making me have to return her breathing mask to her face again.

Alice’s pov

“You two finally got together. Yes,” Abby exclaims while I hope she calms down soon.

“Abby,” I gasp out again while looking at Gibbs who seem perfectly calm about this.

“This is going to be my Christmas card this year,” Abby exclaims while showing us the photo of Gibbs and I kissing in the hospital bed.

“Is that how pale I am?”

“Can I have a moment with my sister?” Kate finally ask after a moment of her not even breathing.

“Sure,” Abby says happily while leaving my room with Gibbs after he get off my bed.

“What’s wrong Kate?” I ask softly, is she ashamed of me or angry at me.

“You told Gibbs about your feelings?” Kate asked me.

“Yeah. Do you have a problem with that?”

“Yeah.”

“Oh. But don’t you want me to be happy?”

“My problem is you didn’t tell me before hand, I wanted to see his face,” Kate admits to me.

“Really,” I gasp out a laugh before informing her, “He asked me to be his girlfriend.”

“You said yes.”

“Are you mad at me?”

“No. Just surprised. I thought I would be dead and buried before it happen. I hope he doesn’t hurt you, because if he does, I’ll kill him,” Kate informs me making me smile behind my mask.

“I thought he didn’t like me back,” I admit.

“Why would you think that? It’s obvious that he likes you.”

“When I first kissed him, he didn’t kiss back. He just sat there like a statue.”

“Maybe he was in shock. I would be.”

“I don’t know, but I honestly thought he didn’t see me like that and I had ruined our friendship.”

“Well, I’m glad you worked up the courage to tell him. So how did you tell him? What wording did you use?”

“I tried thinking up words but I couldn’t so I just kissed him.”

“That’s brave. I like it.”

“Thank you,” I say to her while mock bowling my head as the door opens and Abby and Gibbs returns with cups of drinks.

“Hey, right for us to come back in?” Abby ask while walking into the room without waiting for the answer. She hands Kate a cup of coffee while Gibbs hands me an orange juice because I’m not allowed coffee yet.

“Yeah,” Kate says with a smile while looking at them.

“How’s Tony? The doctor’s won’t let me see him,” I ask them.

“Getting better, he’s got many different women visiting him,” Abby explains to me happily.

“He would be happily with that.”

“Yep. If he wasn’t on oxygen, I think he would be having sex in the hospital.”

“What? He not into breathe play?”

“Good point.”

“Can you two not talk about Tony’s sex life please,” Kate begs of us making me laugh.

“Fine. Abby, did you hear that Kate has a date with Doctor Pitt?” I ask Abby.

“No, she didn’t tell me,” Abby exclaims making Kate blush.

“Yeah. All she did while waiting to find out who was dying, she was flirting with him. Until finding out that he went to college with Tony but in rival frats.”

“Really.”

“Yep. Something happen and Tony’s leg got broke. They are both blaming each other.”
“Really?”
“Yeah.”
“Guys really,” Kate snaps at us in annoyance. Why couldn’t we be nice and not talk about peoples personal lives?
“What?” we both ask her innocently.
“Can we talk about something else?”
“Like what?” Abby asks her.

Hey,” Gibbs says to me once Kate and Abby leave my room for the night.

“Hey,” I answer him.

“How are you feeling?”

“Tired. But I don’t want to sleep. That’s all I’ve been doing.”

“You need sleep, it’ll help your body heal.”

“I know, but I missed most of today. And I don’t want to miss the day again. Every time I wake up I was confused and I don’t know what is happening around me.”

“I’ll be here tonight and wake you up before I leave,” Gibbs promises me while rubbing my hair making me give into my body’s need for more sleep.

Gibbs pov

I rub Alice’s hair even though she is already sleeping, I can’t believe this young, beautiful and kind girl likes me, an old, marine, who has a string of ex-wives.

“I’ve got you, baby. No one is going to hurt you,” I promise her while moving my chair closer to her bed and I pick up the case file I am supposed to be reading for the cold case.

I read the case file for about four minutes before a doctor walks into the room.

“Visiting hours are over, you have to leave,” the doctor snaps at me in annoyance, it is not the first time they have told me.

“I’m not leaving her,” I state while holding Alice’s hand softly.

“Sir, I can’t have an old man staying in the room with a young girl,” the doctor snaps loud enough that it wakes Alice who looks cutely confused.

“Go back to sleep baby,” I whisper to Alice before turning to the doctor and saying, “I’m not leaving her. So do what you have to do and leave.”

“I’ll get the security to remove you,” the doctor snaps at me while walking over to Alice and checking her vitals. He writes it down while Alice watches him closely until he asks her, “How do you feel?” but Alice doesn’t answer him so he asked again, “How do you feel?”

“Can I bite him?” Alice asks me while looking at me.

“What?” I ask her in confusion.

“I told Kate that if one more person asked how I was feeling, I would bite them.”

“Just answer the question, then he can leave.”

“I’m fine. My chest hurts, I’m tired, but I’m fine.”

“Thank you,” the doctor says before leaving again.

“Go back to sleep,” I order her softly.

“Is that an order from my boss?” Alice asks me cheekily.

“Yes, now sleep,” I order her while gently kissing her forehead, and she lays down on the bed for the night, I hope.

“Sir, you have to leave,” the security office says while walking into the door quietly.

“I’m not leaving her.”

“Sir, please.”

“You can check in every hour, I’m not going to hurt my agent, I just don’t want to leave her alone. She’s scared of hospitals.”

“Okay, sir. But if for a second it looks like you are doing something wrong, I’ll kick you out.”

“Thank you.”

Alice pov

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
I’ve been in the hospital for three weeks, I am finally off the oxygen mostly. I spend the morning talking to Kate, while lunch time Ducky comes to talk to me and tell me what is happening at the office. Each night Gibbs stays with me, he always brings me food because I won’t eat the hospital food. Abby informs me that Tony has been released from the hospital a couple days ago but because my lungs are normally weaker than a normal person so it is taking longer to heal for me to go home. “Hey, baby,” Gibbs says while walking into my room without a food tonight. “Hey,” I say while trying to sit up. “I have good news and back news for you.” “What?” “You are being released from the hospital, but you can’t go back to Kate’s apartment.” “Why not?” I ask him in confusion, what’s wrong with our apartment? “Because the elevator broke, and you can’t do the stairs. So you are moving into my home until you get better or the elevator gets fixed,” Gibbs explains to me softly while sitting on the side of the bed. “Why is the elevator broken?” “I don’t know. You want to blow this place?” “Yes,” I exclaim making him laugh while handing me the bag Kate dropped off when Tony was discharged so I have my own clothes to wear in the hospital. I grab the bag and move to the bathroom to dress into a set of bell bottom jeans, a white shirt, with my belt. I am so glad that I forgot to wear it the day Tony opened that letter, I would cry if it was destroyed. “Here you go,” Gibbs say while handing me a new pair of boots because I haven’t had time to replace the ones I was wearing on that faithful day. “Thanks,” I says breathlessly but while putting my red socks on before the boots that Gibbs laces up for me. I than ask the question that’s always on my mind, “Where’s ugly Tony?” “She’s at my house, waiting for you,” Gibbs answers me while helping my off the bed and into an NCIS wind breaker that is Gibbs. We walk out to the reception where we sign the paperwork saying I am leaving with Gibbs. “Do you think we can stop for coffee on the way to your house?” “Is that all you think about?” Gibbs ask me with a small laugh while helping me into his car before loading the portable oxygen machine for me to use when I get too breathless because my lungs still have trouble. “No, of course not. I sometimes think about you,” I state as Gibbs gets in the driver’s side of the car. “Only sometimes?” “When I’m not thinking about coffee, and Ugly Tony.” “Okay, as long as I know where I come in your thoughts.”

We walk into Gibbs house where ugly Tony is waiting for me like Gibbs says. I sit down on the coach while picking my dog up to pat as Gibbs places the oxygen in the master bedroom where I’ll have to sleeping, even though it is up five steps (if that number is wrong, I’m sorry I can’t find how many there is to upstairs!). Gibbs return to where I am sitting and sits beside me. “Are you hungry?” Gibbs ask me softly. “A little. Do you even have food here?” I ask him while looking at him, I have never seen food here all the times I’ve been here. “Nope. Chinese?” “Sure. That sounds good, but you can’t live on takeout.” “Not even dating a month and trying to change me,” Gibbs mumbles in annoyance. “Gibbs, that’s not what I meant. It’s not health or cheap. And you’ll look like Tony if you only live on takeout. I’m sorry,” I explain to him while holding his arm so he can’t get away. “It’s alright. I promise. Just don’t try to change me.” “What’s to change? If I wanted someone else or to act someone else, I wouldn’t date you. I’d date them.” “That’ll change,” Gibbs mumbles before a thought hits him making him say, “Alice, I’ve told you already call me Jethro.”
“Sorry it’s habit. You’ve been Gibbs to me for over a year, almost two, but you’ve been only Jethro for less than a month.”
“I know. And I’ll keep reminding you until it is habit to call me Jethro.”
“If you say so,” I say softly while leaning my head on Gibbs shoulder while he picks up his phone to order dinner.
“Why don’t you watch TV while I get the food,” Gibbs offers to me while getting up making me have to sit up off his shoulder with a pout.
“Thanks,” I mumble as he hands me the remote for the TV and place a quick kiss on my pouting lips before leaving.
“I’ll be right back,” he promises before leaving as I flick through the channels before I decide on watching ‘20/20 truth and lies: the Family Manson’. It is an hour and twenty-one minutes documentary on Charles Manson. I lay across the couch with Tony laying on my bally while watching it with the ads.
I don’t notice how much time has passed until Gibbs returns and place the food on the table between the couch and TV.
“What’s you watching?” Gibbs ask me softly while sitting down when I sit up from my laying position.
“20/20 truth and lies: the Family Manson,” I answer him before asking, “Do you remember when he was at large?”
“Yeah, we didn’t know it was him. I used to read about the crimes,” Gibbs answers me while handing me some food with chop sticks.
“Thanks,” I mumble while beginning to eat my yummy rice.
“Welcome,” Gibbs informs me while eating his own food, which is soup and a rice. We eat in silence while watching 20/20. Once we finish eating I lean back against Gibbs’ shoulder again while watching the episode. Gibbs gently lays his arm around my shoulders and resting his hand on my stomach, giving me the ability to hold his hand as we watch the show.
Once the episode was over, I was only just awake making Gibbs look down at me with a soft look.
“Come on, baby. Let’s get you cleaned up and into bed,” Gibbs whispers to me while standing up and pull me to my feet.
“I’m not tired,” I lie making Gibbs chuckle at my bad lie.
“I’m sure you’re not,” Gibbs says to me while placing his arm around my shoulder to hold me close as he leads me up the stairs to upstairs where I have to stop for a moment to catch my breath. But once I have it back Gibbs helps me to the master bedroom and through to the bathroom where I sit down on to the closed toilet while Gibbs fills the bath with warm water for me to get clean.
“Come on, baby, you need to remove this clothing. You can’t bath fully clothed,” Gibbs whispers to me once the bath is full.
“I know,” I mumble but make no move to remove the clothing, because I am finding it hard to breathe at the moment.
“Do you want me to leave?” Gibbs ask because he knows that at the hospital I wasn’t allowed to shower on my own encase something happened.
“No. Yes. What if something happens?”
“How about if I leave, but I’ll stay in the bedroom so that is something happens you just have to call out me.”
“That sounds good,” I agree with Gibbs before he places a kiss on my forehead before leaving the bathroom. I remove the clothes I am wearing and climbing into the bath that Gibbs filled with bubbles to give me some privacy. I use Gibbs soap to wash my body but I don’t wash my hair, I’m too tired to wash my hair. Once I am clean I get out and use a towel but I realise I don’t have any clothes in the bathroom to put on.
“Jethro, can you hand me something to wear?” I call throw the cracked door.
“Sure,” Gibbs calls while moving around the bedroom to find some clothes. He puts his hand and arm throw the crack in the door without opening it anymore.
“Thanks,” I call to him while putting on the clothes that turns out to be, one of his old NIS shirt and a
pair of boxers. I open the door while using a toothbrush that I always use when I’m here. Once my teeth are clean, I move back into the bedroom where Gibbs is ready for his shower. I climb into the bed while Gibbs heads into the shower to get clean before getting into his very confinable bed, which surprised me, I always thought his bed would be unconfinable.

After a quick shower, Gibbs climbs into the bed on the other side of me for the night. Gibbs has set up the oxygen machine on my side of the bed because I still need oxygen at night because I have trouble breathing while I’m asleep. Gibbs pulls me into his arms with my back against his chest, as we fall into a peaceful sleep.

The next morning I wake up to a cold, empty bed making me roll my eye. One day I am going to wake up before Gibbs, maybe. I get up from the bed, and do my bathroom routine before heading down stairs at a low place. Having to stop a couple of times to catch my breath but eventually I get to have bottom and are about to go into the Kitchen where Abby is sitting.

“Morning,” I mumble to her while taking the seat across from her.

“Morning. Gibbs and Kate have a case today, so I’m here to keep you company,” Abby explains to me while offering me some of the chips and gravy she is eating.

“Which one asked you to that?”

“Both, moments apart. They passed each other to ask me.”

“They worry too much.”

“I think it’s sweet. So what do you want to do today?”

“Don’t you have to go to the lab for the evidence?”

“Yeah. But not too they ring me.”

“You can go to the lab, I’ll find something to fill my day,” I offer making Abby grin.

“Are you sure?”

“Yeah, go on. I’m fine. And if anyone says anything, they can talk to me,” I say in fake macho making her laugh.

“Cool. But if you change your mind, you can come to the lab or autopsy.”

“I’ll keep that in mind,” I inform her while she gets up and walks out the front door while I move over to the TV to watch something, anything. I settle on a MASH marathon, I don’t even bother getting dressed, where am I going? Nowhere that’s where, so I can lunge around in Gibbs clothes.

“Hey Alice,” Ducky says at lunch times, he walks into the lounge room where I am watching MASH.

“Hey,” I say back to him while sitting up as he sits onto the single chair while I’m on the couch.

“How are you feeling?”

“Better. How’s the case?”

“Good. We believe it’s the husband who killed her. We’re just waiting on the DNA results.”

“That’s good. Not that she is dead, but he’s not going to get away with this.”

“Yeah. You should have seen this girl, she wouldn’t have been much older than you are, and she is black and blue.”

“That’s sad. It’s even sadder that no one saved her,” I state sadly. I couldn’t imagine living in fear, or being abused.

“I agrees. So what have you been doing today?”

“Watching MASH. Abby was here for a little bit. But she left back to the lab.”

“Have you had lunch?”

“No yet. Gibbs doesn’t have food, I don’t know how he survives.”

“He lives at work,” Ducky reminds me making me laugh before trying to work out what we’re going to eat.

“You want to go a café?” Ducky asked me.

“Sure. I could eat, but I have to get dressed,” I inform Ducky while forcing my body off the couch to head to the stairs to head upstairs to get dressed. I get into the bedroom to see Gibbs has placed my bag on the draws in his bedroom. I end up grabbing an old pair of well-worn jeans, a red T-Shirt and
red socks. I put my shoes on last before heading down the steps slowly, meet Ducky at the door where we put on our coats, I put on the wind breaker I wore back from the hospital.

“Tony’s going to meet us at the café,” Ducky informs me making me node.

“Okay.”

“Afternoon,” Tony exclaims as we sit across from him.

“Hey Tony. How are you feeling?” I ask Tony while sitting down.

“Getting better. You?”

“I still have to use oxygen when I’m sleeping. And am easily worn out. What about you?”

“Not as much. But I am getting better. We have to strength our lungs again.”

“You will have to do physical therapy to get your lung capacity back,” Ducky explains to us.

“Yeah, I hate that. It tiring.”

“I haven’t started yet,” I state making Tony grin evilly.

“Why not? I started weeks ago.”

“Because, they didn’t want to start me on it when I was still using oxygen for 23 hours a day.”

“That makes sense.”

“How may I help you,” the waitress asked us while coming to a stop beside our table.

“I’ll have spaghetti,” Tony ask her politely.

“Me too,” Ducky ask her.

“Me three. Can I have a coffee two,” I request of her softly.

“It’ll be up shortly.” The waitress informs us before leaving us with a grin at Tony.

“Alice, I heard a rumour about you,” Tony exclaims with a pervy grin.

“What’s that?” I ask him, but I get the feeling I’m going to regret that.

“You were caught kissing someone.”

“And?”

“By Abby and Kate.”

“And?”

“You couldn’t wait until you were discharged? I waited until I was discharged.”

“I was discharged yesterday. You really expect me to believe that waited that long? I know your room was full of female guests.”

“Yeah, but I wasn’t caught snogging them.”

“But you did snog them.”

“No comment.”

“I can’t believe your judging me.”

“Here’s your food,” the waitress says while placing our food in front of us. As we eat we talk about random things and just catch up with each other. But after eating Ducky has to return to work so Tony promise to make sure I get back to Gibbs house.

“You know, I never thought you would kiss someone at the hospital,” Tony exclaims.

“Do you even know who I was kissing?” I ask him.

“Someone from your old school,” Tony guesses making me laugh at him with how wrong he is.

“Nope. I don’t talk to anyone I went to school with.”

“Well then I don’t know,” Tony comments as we get our gear to leave and payed our part of the bill. Once outside we get into Tony’s loan-a-car because he hasn’t replaced his car yet. We get in and Tony drives me back to Gibbs house, I climb out of the ugly car and walk into the house where I am meet with my dog waiting at the door.

“Hey Tony,” I mumble while picking my dog up after I took my coat off and carried my dog over to the couch where I put MASH back on. I talk to my dog, “Let’s see what happens to the doctors in red and white.”

“Hey, baby,” Gibbs says while walking to the lounge room where I am still watching MASH making me look up at him with a small smile.

“Hey,” I mumble while sitting up when I see he has food, and I’m hungry again.
“How was your day?”
“Good. I saw Abby, Tony and Ducky. And I got tap watch MASH,” I answer him while he hands me a burger.
“Yeah. I hear you sent Abby away. What’s that about?”
“She had a case, I don’t want to be the reason someone is free longer than necessary.”
“We got him,” Gibbs informs me while sitting next to me and watching the episode of MASH.
“That’s good,” I mumble while eating my yummy burger.
“Yeah,” Gibbs agrees with me.
“Do you want to work on your boat?” I asked him once we’re finished eating.
“You can’t go down there,” Gibbs reminds me.
“I can watch MASH while you’re working on your boat.”
“I don’t want to leave you along.”
“I’ll be fine. Go do what you enjoy. You don’t have to stop paying attention to your wife just because I’m here,” I say while shooing Gibbs towards the basement.
“Call if you need anything.”
“Sir, yes, sir,” I say with a mock solute making him give me a look, but still kissing me on the forehead before leaving.
“Behave,” Gibbs orders me with a small smile while leaving the room to work on his boat, but I can’t go down that because of the wood particles would set my healing back. I lay down on the couch to watch TV.
As the episode drags on, I pick up my phone to text my sister.
‘Hey Kate. How was your day?’ I send to the only family member that talks to me besides Ducky.
‘Hey Alice. My day was great. How was yours?’ Kate responds to me.
‘Good. I saw Abby, Ducky and Tony, and I got to watch MASH all day but for lunch time.’
‘How is it staying with Gibbs? What is he like on at his house?’
‘He’s nice. But he is always nice to me so that’s nothing new.’
‘I guess you have a point. He is different when you’re around. You should have seen him on this case.’
‘What do you mean?’
‘He was just acting different.’
‘If you say so.’
‘How are you feeling?’
‘Getting better. But I’m bored, I so want to go to work. But I don’t think anyone would allow that.’
‘You’re not going to work until the doctor clears you.’
‘Party pooper.’
‘Alice, you almost died. Got together with your crush and all you can think about is returning to work.’
‘Hey, I found out Tony doesn’t know who I was caught kissing but that I was caught kissing someone in the hospital.’
‘Really?’
‘Yep. He thought it was someone from school.’
‘Really?’
‘Yep.’
‘I didn’t see that coming. I mean it’s kind of obvious who you like.’
‘The only reason you and Abby knows is because I told you.’
‘So. I still now. That’s all that matters.’
‘So, what’s your plans for tonight?’
‘I have a date. He meant to be here within the hour.’
‘Are you ready? Or do you still need to get dress?’
‘I’m ready.’
‘Okay.’
‘He’s here. I’ll take to you later, or tomorrow.’
‘That was a quick hour.’
‘Shut it.’

After this fun conversation, I decide that I wanted to have a bath because the marathon is over now anyway. I head upstairs slowly and into the master bedroom, where I grab the clothes I slept in last night, once I have the cloth I head into the bathroom where I begin filling the bath with warm, almost hot water. As the bath is filling up, I remove my clothes and put them into the hamper before climbing into the bath. I clean my body thoroughly before washing my hair with Gibbs shampoo, making me feel nice because I now smell like him. Once my body is clean, I climb out of the bath and get dressed into the cloth and walk out into the bed room, or I would have if I didn’t hit a hard, warm chest.

“Hey,” I mumble into the worm, dirty chest.
“You scared me,” Gibbs informs me while holding me tightly to his dusty chest.
“I did?” I ask while leaning back away from his chest to look at his face.
“I came up to check on you after two hour hours, and you won’t there,” Gibbs informs me while holding my arm tightly in fear.
“I’m sorry. I wanted to have a bath. I felt dirty,” I explain to the overprotective marine I seem to have fallen in love with.
“You just scared me,” Gibbs whispers to me before I lean forward to kiss him on his lips. I thought he was going to pull away, but instead he kissed me back harder while running his fingers though my wet hair. The feeling of Gibbs fingers running throw my hair made me moan in pleasure when he pulls it slightly. The sound makes Gibbs smirk against my lips but he does break the kiss while running his hand throw my hair on more time before removing them altogether. He stops back from me with a proud smirk on his face because I’m still standing there blinking slowly. He says to me softly, “Why don’t you go to bed, I’ll get clean and join you.”

“Okay,” I mumble, still in shock, I still can’t believe that Gibbs likes me and he is a great kisser. But that last bit is probably not surprising to everyone else, he has been married three time, so he has to be able to kiss, and do other things. I slowly node before moving over to the bed, while Gibbs laughs as he walks into the bathroom.

“Meanie,” I mumble while snuggling into the bed. Why did he have to stop? I was enjoying myself and the feeling of his hard body against my body. I don’t even notice that the water is no longer running or that Gibbs is watching me. I slowly node before moving over to the bed, while Gibbs laughs as he walks into the bathroom.

“Nothing,” I mumble the lie badly.
“Don’t lie to me.”
“You like being mean,” I put making him smirk when he releases what I’m pouting about. He gently places a kiss on my lips but it quickly gets heated and his hand return to my hair. As the kiss grows more heated, that Gibbs rolls over so he is laying onto of me without breaking the kiss, as he settles between my legs, I feel a very big bulge rubbing where I need it most. Making me moan in pleasure when he grinds down into me.

Gibbs hand begins running up my side under the shirt I have borrowed from him, and I run my hair through his hair. Gibbs breaks the kiss too kiss down my neck so he is kissing over my pulse. As he nibbles on my pulse point on my neck his phone begins ringing making him have to remove his lips from my neck to look over where he put it on the bedside table.

“Gibbs,” Gibbs answers his phone making me pout again because I was enjoying that. I lean up when Gibbs listens to the other person end of his phone, I lean up and kiss his neck making his breath hitch, he continues to talk, “Yeah right.” I suck on his neck above where his shirt collar is, making Gibbs to scuff his groan because he is still on the phone. He finish says, “Yeah, I understand.” Gibbs than hangs up his phone before giving me a look that says I’m going to get into trouble but he informs me, “I have a case.”

“Can I help?” I ask while removing my mouth away from his very marathon neck.
“No, you are on sick leave,” Gibbs remind me while getting out of the bed as I pout at him, why
can’t I help? Or why can’t he return to bed?
“But, I can still help. I’m not dying anymore.”
“Alice. Go to sleep and that’s an order,” Gibbs orders me while pointing at me making me put in disappointment.
“But I to help. I don’t like just sitting around, waiting for my lungs to heal. I get bored,” I mumble to Gibbs, I mean come on I spent the day watching TV. I never watch TV for more than an hour at a time normally.
“Well, sleep and get better, then you won’t be bored.”
“But, I’m bored,” I whine but lay back down.
I move into the bathroom to get dressed to return to work for our latest case, but there is a problem, specifically a problem made by the little devil in my bed. I get dressed into the clothes and walk back out in the bedroom too see the devil is still away but pouting at the wall on the other side of the bedroom. Sulking because I won’t let her go to work with me, I think it’s cute that she wants to go to work, even when she just got out of the hospital from this case.
“Alice, I just want you to get better,” I whisper to her while rubbing her hair in the attempt to get her to smile because I look the will to go to work. But she just continues pouting at the wall making me smirk, she is too cute. I try again, “Alice, baby. You need sleep,” I whisper to her making her bury her face in my pillow.
“I wanna go to work,” She mumbles while I lean over her to look at the beautiful face, at least the half I can see.
“I know. But you can’t return to work yet. I’ll be home soon and we’ll do something so you’re not bored,” I promise her but I know she just wants to return to work. That is the type of person she is.
“What if you don’t finish the case,” Alice asked me while finally turning to face me.
“I’ll close the case. Don’t worry, and I’ll find something for you to do.”
“I can work.”
“Something not at work. I promise,” I promise her before leaning in for a quick kiss, or it would have been if the little devil didn’t deepening the kiss by nibbling on my lip, I never now this little devil was a biter. And that fact isn’t helping my problem at all, I attempt to break the kiss and I would have succussed too if she didn’t follow me while putting more pressure into the kiss making me want to continue but I force myself away from her.
“Alice, baby. I got to go to work, sleep,” I order her while placing a kiss on her forehead because I can’t trust her to kiss her on the lips again. She pouts as she snuggles into the pillows on the bed. I lean sown and tuck her into the bed before leaving for the case. On the way out the door I grab my gun and coat, once I’m outside I lock the door to keep Alice safe.
Once I’m in my car I ring Kate, “Kate, we have a case. Get McGee, Ducky and the truck.”
“Yes boss,” Kate mumbles sleepily through the phone before I hang up.
Gibbs has finally let me back to work so I am sitting at his desk, working on going through his hundreds of emails he got while I was on sick leave, because he didn’t clean them out. “Is that Tony?” McGee asks Kate who is sketching in her sketch pad I gave her for her last birthday. “No, Kate denies while hiding the sketch pad. “Are you sure? It really resembles…” “Is there a reason you’ve been haunting my desk week?” “Uh, no. I was just…” “Or maybe you just decided to take over DiNozzo’s job of annoying everyone while he’s on sick leave,” I state while reading a letter from Gibbs’ ex-wife. Why do they email him? “I just wanted to check that everything was okay.” “Why wouldn’t it be?” Kate demands of him tightly. “Well, you and Tony were close and, you know…” “No, I don’t know. What?” “He almost died.” “So did I McGee,” I remind him with a straight face. “We’re NCIS agents, McGee. There is a chance one of us might die every time we walk through the door,” Kate reminds him while ignoring me because she has enough guilt without thinking about it at the moment. “Yeah, but I’m the idiot that handed him an envelope full off the plague,” McGee reminds us. “It could have been worse,” I comment. “How?” “You could have giving it to Gibbs.” “Tim, it’s not your fault. Look, if you want to think about something, why don’t you think about all of the times that Tony has insulted us, invaded our privacy, the fact that he almost died owing a all money,” Kate orders McGee when he falls silent from the thought of Gibbs almost dying of plague. “That’s true. He can be pretty obnoxious,” McGee agrees with Kate. “Uh-huh,” Kate mumbles as Tony’s phone begins ringing. “Do you miss him as much as I do?” “More. It’s part of his charm. It’s like an ex-rated Peter pan,” Kate comments while getting up to leave the squad room for a moment before turning to McGee to inform him, “You know he told all the girls downstairs you’re gay, right? Said it would cut down on the competition.” “That bastard,” McGee exclaims after a king beat of silence. “Hold onto that feeling and you’re going to be just fine.” “Do you want to know what he said about you?” “Mmm.” “That you tried to sleep with him when you were in Paraguay.” “I will kill him.” “If you wanted to kill him, you should have done it last month. It was the perfect time to get away with murder,” I inform Kate as she glares at Tony’s desk. “You did the right thing. Where is the car exactly?” Kate answers her ringing phone. “Jit, Kate!” Tony shouts while jumping up behind Kate’s desk in the hopes of scaring her as Gibbs walks over to his desk while I move out of the chair so he can sit down. I lean against the ledge behind his desk watching Tony get ignored by his team mates. “Sorry about that, Captain. Where did you say the car was?” “Must be important. Probie, did you miss me? Long-time no…” “Thank you captain.” “What’s wrong with him?” Tony demands about McGee who is ignoring him. “Virginia State Police just got a nine-one-one call, Gibbs. Two dead sailors,” Kate reports to Gibbs.
“Where?” Gibbs demands of her.
“In a car off Route Seventeen in Fredericksburg.”
“Let’s roll! Gas the truck.”
“Sure,” Tony begins.
“On it, boss,” McGee agrees while running off to do it making me laugh at Tony’s face.
“Maybe I did die,” Tony complains.
“Feel that?” Gibbs ask Tony.
“Feel what?” Tony ask right before Gibbs hits the back of Tony’s head making Tony complain, “Ow.”
“You’re still alive. Welcome back, DiNozzo!”

We arrive at the crime scene to see the car has come to a stop at the bottom of an embankment
making us have to climb down. Tony stays at the top to talk to the state cops while we walk over to
the embankment. Gibbs helps me down the embankment so I won’t fall down the embankment.
“Looks like the shooter knew what he was doing, Gibbs. Tight groupings, three rounds each,” Kate
comments while we look at our victims.
“Every one of them a kill a kill shot. Passengers Curlis Janssen. Pensacola, Florida. No military ID.
Credit cards and money are intact,” Gibbs states.
“So it wasn’t a robbery?”
Depends,” I state.
“On what?”
“On what else is missing, Kate,” Gibbs comments.
“On why their dead, Kate,” I state at the same time as Gibbs.
“Looks like the killer tried to clean up,” Kate comments while looking around the crime scene where
there is a cloth across the lap of one of the victim’s.
“Not exactly,” I comment while moving the cloth to see that the victim is missing his hands.
“Ah! Oh.”
“We knew he took at least two things with him when he left,” Gibbs comments while looking at the
poor victim.
“He needed his prints?”
“Bag it.”
“Boss! State cops ran the mustang’s plate. It’s a rental car out of Dullies Airport. I got a call into his,”
Tony begins reporting before falling down the hill making him exclaim again, “Ow.”
“Are you okay?” I ask Tony while looking where he fell.
“I’m just trying to catch my breath,” Tony gasp out.
“Should have taken that extra week off, DiNozzo. Help him up, Kate. We’ll see what’s keeping
Ducky,” Gibbs orders before walking away.
“Does that hurt?” Kate ask Tony without helping him up.
“Yep,” Tony answers Kate.
“Good,” Kate states while taking a photo of his pained expression before leaving him on the ground
to get up himself. which he does slowly making me asked.
“That tiring hey,” I state.
“Yeah,” Tony wheezes out.
“That don’t come back to work early.”
“What about you? You should be on sick leave.”
“Yeah well, I didn’t fall down a hill.”
“SO if I didn’t fall down the hill. You wouldn’t think I should still be at home.”
“Yeah, before the plague you wouldn’t have fallen down the hill. Therefore you are not ready to be
back to work.”
“You’re brain works weird.”
“Thank you.”
“Looks like a professional hit. Probably took the hands to confirm the kill,” Tony guesses while
trying to prove that he is needed and hasn’t been replaced yet.
“McGee told me what you said,” Kate finally snaps at Tony.
“Did he now? Oh, come on. I was only joking around. I didn’t think he’d believe me.”
“Really?” and why’s that?”
“Anyone looking at you can tell your breast are real.”
“You told him I had breast implants?!”
“No,” Tony says after a beat when he releases that he has just let the cat out of the bag making me laugh.
“You know what, Tony? I can’t even believe I worried about you. You are nothing but a…”
“Snake,” I cut her off while moving away from the snake wrapping around Kate’s leg.
“Yeah, exactly.”
“No, big-big-big-big- snake. Down there,” I exclaim while pointing at the snake in fear. I hate snakes, maybe as much as the dark.
“Tell me it’s not poisonous,” Kate gasps out in fear.
“I think it is,” Tony informs her making Kate whimper while I move further away.
“Eeuu!”
“Oh, cool corn snake. Can I hold him?” McGee exclaims while walking up to us before going to touch it.
“No, it’s poisonous, McGee!” Kate snaps at him.
“Actually they’re not, Kate.”
“What about that one you caught at Shenandoah State Park? You had it around your neck for like an hour.”
“That near-fatal illness may have clouded my memory.”
“You’re such a loser!” Kate hisses at Tony in her full anger before hitting and then saying, “All right, back to work. McGee, check the trunk. Nobody touches dead bodies until Ducky says all clear.”
“Freeze, McGee! Don’t move! Car’s wired to explode. Looks like the detonator’s tied to the trunk,” Tony exclaims while looking under the car because he is still on the ground with the snake making it easy for him to see.
“What?” McGee exclaims while holding the key partly turned in the back lock of the trunk.
“How far did you turn the key?” I ask him while moving closer. Who is trying to kill my friends again?
“Uh… nope sure. Almost all the way, I think.”
“Okay, don’t let it snap back, all right?” Tony orders McGee while getting up off the ground. Yeah,” McGee agrees with him while grabbing the key over McGee’s hand.
“Let go,” Tony orders making McGee let go before stepping back away from the car while Tony holds the key.
“Okay.”
“Okay, all of you run!” Tony orders us.
“Tony we’re not leaving you standing,” Kate begins.
“I’m a lot faster than you are! I’ll be right behind you. This is not a debate, okay? This thing might be primed already,” Tony cuts Kate off while ordering us to leave, which we did. Running is not my foray at the moment, we running up the hill where I stumble a couple of times before reaching the road side where Gibbs is.
“It’s the car!” McGee yells out Gibbs who is on his phone between puffing.
“IT’s wired to,” Kate shouts while I gasp for air, right before the explosion cuts her off making us all fall onto the road making me gasp in pain while we turn to the burning crime scene, making Kate exclaim, “Tony!!”
“Boss, you remember when I said I never felt better? Tony gasps at Gibbs once he crawled out of the ditch that car was in before finishing, “I lied.”

“Alice are you sure your find?” Gibbs ask me again in the elevator on the way to autopsy where Tony is being checked out by Ducky.
“Jethro, I told you. I’, fine,” I inform him while placing my hand on his arm to make him believe me.
“Baby, your breathing heavy. You’re not fine.”
“My chest hurts a little but it always hurts nowadays,” I admit to Gibbs while looking sad.
“Please. Just don’t overdo it,” Gibbs begs of me while pulling me into his arm.
“I want. I don’t want you to follow throw on your threat.”
“I’ll do it,” Gibbs promises me while leading me out of the elevator know that it is at autopsy because he knows I won’t go home.

“Okay, that didn’t come out the way I intended,” Kate states as we walk into autopsy.
“What didn’t, Kate?”
“Oh, I was just saying…”

“She was just expressing our concern for Tony,” Ducky informs us while cutting Kate off.
“Hey Ducky,” I wave at Ducky happily before adding the question on our minds, “Yeah? How is he? Dead yet?”

“Stubborn, pigheaded, and unaware of his own limitations.”
“Sounds about right,” Gibbs state making me smile, because that’s too true.
“I haven’t finished with you yet,” Ducky warns Tony before getting down to business.
“Did we get a positive ID here yet?” I ask while looking at the poor victim’s body, or what is left of the body after the explosion.
“Okay, that didn’t come out the way I intended,” Kate states as we walk into autopsy.
“What didn’t, Kate?”

“Okay, that didn’t come out the way I intended,” Kate states as we walk into autopsy.

“Fortunately the skull remained relatively in tack,” Ducky states as we walk around the body.
“The problem is sorting out which parts belong with whom,” Jimmy explain making Gibbs even more annoyed than he is already.
“Yeah, I can see that, Palmer,” Gibbs snaps at the idiot.
“The dental records were conclusive. Passengers were Navy Lieutenants Dean Westfall and Curtis Janssen,” Ducky explains.
“Kate, pull up the service records. Have McGee find out who made that nine-one-one call”

“On it.”
“Tony.”

“Yeah?” Tony ask while perking up like an excited puppy.

“Go lie down before you pass out.”
“I’m not going to pass out. I might cry a little, maybe feel sorry for myself. But DiNozzos do not pass out,” Tony exclaims as we enter the elevator while he stumble before stating, “Coming, boss.”
“Are you going to be okay?” McGee asked Tony while I work on Gibbs computer.
“Sure,” Tony answers from his spot behind his desk.
“You’re not looking so hot.”
“Well, at least that’s an improvement.”
“Over what?”
“According to Gibbs, I look like crap.”
“Tony, he was commenting in general from the moment he meet you until the moment you die. Not your physical appearance right now. Which also looks like death warmed over,” I comment making Tony scoff at me.
“You know Kate has really been worried about you,” McGee attempts to play maker for my sister and Tony which is just disgusting.
“Kate worries about everything,” Tony comment from his spot on the ground.
“No, no, no. I mean really worried.”
“What’s your point, probie?”
“Well, I think that maybe… you know…”
“Me and Kate?! It would never happen,” Tony chuckles at McGee’s naivety.
“Why not?”
“She’s too smart for that. You know what – you don’t believe me? She’s coming right now.”
“Gibbs wants to know who made that nine-one-one call this morning, Tim,” Kate orders McGee like she is the boss and Gibbs and Tony isn’t dead yet.
“On it.”
“Where’s DiNozzo?”
“Dead? In the morgue? Lying?” I offer to her.
“Uh… I think he’s laying down somewhere,” McGee explains to Kate while signalling to Kate where Tony is laying down, a sign that she picks up.
“Oh, good. He need it.”
“You care a lot about him, don’t you, Kate?” McGee says again before Kate picks the water bottle.
“Well, he’s my teammate. What do you think?”
“I don’t know. Sometimes I think it might be more than that.”
“Tony? Are you kidding?”
“Oh, come on. You never thought about it?”
“Well, I guess there are times when Tony can be… charming, warm, and not completely obnoxious.”
“Kate, can I have some of your drugs? Or whatever you’re using to change your perception of reality?” I ask Kate while looking up form this lovely computer.
“Alice, I’m not high. I’m telling the truth.”
“Right, so if he wasn’t your teammate?” McGee gets back onto his topic.
“Oh, that’s a tough one. Well, on the plus side, he is smart, brave. Not to mention of hot. You know, in a different word I could see myself marrying someone like him,” Kate lies before leaning over the desk and pouring water on Tony’s head.
“Ah!” Tony exclaims while jumping up off the ground, “Very funny.”
“Hey, I thought I told you to lie down!” Gibbs snaps at Tony over Kate laughter while walking over to me at his desk.
“I was. I am,” Tony defends himself.
“Not here.”
“That’s not possible. How’s that possible?” Tony ask Abby as we walk into the lab where Tony is laying on the ground.
“It shouldn’t be possible,” Abby agrees with him.
“Oh, it’s possible,” Gibbs states as a flatulence breaks the air from near Tony.
“That was the stiffed animal, boss. Right Abby?” Tony defends himself when Gibbs glares at him for farting.
“What stuffed animal?” Abby asked him innocently.
“Abs, are you sure these explosive aren’t traceable?” Gibbs ask Abby because that is what she was talking to Tony about when we walked in, untraceable explosive is not good.
“Um, so far. But I’m still checking.”
“What about the detonator?” I asked her softly.
“Also weird. The electronics are fairly simple, but there’s no serial numbers on anything. It’s like it’s been sanitized,” Abby explains as ‘Tony’ farts again.
“Let’s go, DiNozzo. We’ve got problems. Someone’s trying to kill us again,” Gibbs snaps in anger.”
“I don’t think he meant that literally,” Tony say to Abby who looks scared as he hands the stuffed animal back.
“Don’t worry, Abby’s even if someone is trying to kill us, we’re very hard to kill,” I promise Abby while giving her a quick hug before following the two mean into the elevator.

“Okay, thanks, Lieutenant. We’ll still need a copy of that dispatch tape,” McGee says into the phone before turning to us and reporting, “Boss, according to State Police the nine-one-one call was…”
“Anonymous?” Gibbs and I finish for him tightly.
“Yes. And it was also…”
“Untraceable.”
“Yeah. Uh... they’re sending out a tape of the call over.”
“Kate, what do we know about the Lieutenants?” Gibbs ask Kate.
“They’re both pilots, Gibbs. Lieutenant Curtis Janssen is an instructor in Pensacola,” Kate reports.
“What’s he doing in Virginia?” I ask her in confusion.
“Accordant to his unit he was on leave visiting his friend. Lieutenant Dean Westfall also out of Pensacola, but for the last two months has been T.A.D at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.”
“Proving ground?” McGee asked in confusion.
“That’s where they test new military equipment. Technology, Probie. Maybe they used Westfall’s prints to access the base,” Tony explains.
“I checked, Tony. None of Aberdeen’s security systems rely on fingerprint or palm scanners,” Kate informs him.
“What was he working on there?” Gibbs asked her tightly.
“Classified. I will find out.”
“So what’s going on, boss?” Tony asked in confusion.
“That car didn’t have any military decals,” I state.
“Lieutenants were wearing civvies,” Gibbs finishes for me.
“And the nine-one-one caller specifically said that it was two dead sailors,” McGee adds.
“Someone wanted NCIS to investigate the scene.”
“Why?” Kate ask in surprise and fear, she has just almost lost her sister and someone is targeting us again.
“The same reason they rigged that car to explode, Kate.”
“We were set up. So someone really is trying to kill us?” Tony asks in surprise.
“Yeah, that came pretty damn close,” I state while looking at them in annoyance. I have only just got back to work and their already trying to kill us again.
“You want some?” McGee offers to Tony some of the Chinese food that he and Kate are eating while I slowly drink the soup they got for me.
“No, thank you,” Tony denies the food making me freeze for a moment.
“He just passed on free food,” McGee say to Kate from his spot beside me at Kate’s desk.
“Maybe he is dying,” Kate say.
“Well, I haven’t had much of an appetite lately, Kate, on account of having the pneumonic plague,” Tony snaps.
“You weren’t the only one who got it, but you’re the only one making a big deal about it,” I snap at
Tony in annoyance.
“Yeah, I know, Tony. I was there. You don’t have to keep bringing it up every five minutes,” Kate snaps at Tony.
“It’s not every day you escape the clutches of the Black Death, Kate. It was life-changing experience,” Tony defends himself.
“How so, Tony?” McGee asks Tony innocently.
“Kate, I want to know what Westfall was doing in Aberdeen by the time I get back,” Gibbs orders us while walking into the squad room to his desk.
“Where are you going?” Kate asks him.
“Why do I get the feeling I should have stayed home today?” I ask everyone while we move back to our desks.
“No clue,” Kate answers me sarcastically.

Why take someone’s hands?” McGee asked us into the squad room that night.
“Trophies?” Tony offers.
“But why leave the other lieutenant’s?”
“What if they took them to throw us off the trail of the real reason they killed them,” I offer.
“If he’s chopping hands off, I don’t think we can expect him to be rational, McGee,” Kate informs him while giving me a look for my opposition.
“We’ve got trouble,” McGee exclaims.
“What’s your first hint?”
“The two dead bodies downstairs or the explosion, McGee?” Tony asks him sarcastically.
“No, I mean FBI trouble,” McGee corrects them as Fornell enters the squad room.
“Fornell?” Kate asks him in surprise.
“We must be in worse shape than we thought,” Tony states.
“Where’s Gibbs?” Fornell demands of us.
“I thought he was going to feed you,” I state while leaning back from the desk I am sitting at.
“He’s not here,” Kate answers him.
“Where is he, Agent Todd?” Fornell demands again.
“He’s out. Try him on his cell.”
“I did. He’s not answering.”
“I wouldn’t answer you either,” I mumble but by the glare I guess he heard me.
“What’s going on?” Tony asks him.
“Ari Haswari is back in country,” Fornell states making me sit up straight and lose my joking attitude all together.
“You let that psycho back in the states without tell us?!” Kate exclaims in anger.
“He was supposed to be helping us uncover an Al Qaeda cell in the DC area.”
“What do you mean ‘supposed to’, Fornell?” Tony demands of him.
“They lost him. Can’t trust them with a cup of coffee but let’s give them a murder and fucking idiot,” I snap at Fornell in anger.
“We now think he’s here for more personal reasons. He’s planning on killing Gibbs,” Fornell informs us.
“Of course he is. Gibbs shot him, twice. And you let him back. You need to be shot,” I scream at Fornell in anger but more importantly fear, Ari’s back and this time he is going to die.

“Please call me back,” Tony says into the phone when he rung Gibbs’ again before hanging up. We have been ringing him for the last hour since Fornell left after I went to punch him in the face. Tony turns to Kate to complain, “That’s twenty messages I left. We should look for him, McGee.”
“Look for who?” Gibbs demands of him while walking into the squad room.
“We’ve been calling you for the last hour, Boss.”
“Well, yeah. My ringer thing got turned off,” Gibbs exclaims while sitting down at his desk.
“You’re not going to believe whose back in town.”
“Ari.”
“You saw him. Didn’t you?” I inquire of him while moving over to his desk from where I was standing behind Tony, something that is a back idea since the last time.
“Maybe you will,” Tony comments.
“Fornell said that he’s here to,” McGee begins.
“You, I know. I just had coffee with him,” Gibbs answers me.
“So what happened?” Tony asks Gibbs.
“He tried to kill me. We find out what Westfall was doing in Aberdeen yet?”
“Uh, boss, aren’t you going to elaborate a little bit first?” McGee begs.
“Yeah, McGee! I’, alive! Now tell me about Westfall.”
Uh… he was only attached to Aberdeen. He was actually working with an aerospace contractor in Maryland. Danborn Avionics.”
“Doing what?”
“Testing field service modules or something like that. I have no idea. The FBI sent a team over to the company to investigate their security,” Tony reports.
“The FBI?”
“Lots happened in the last hour, boss.”
“Whatever Fornell says is a lie,” I state making Gibbs give me a look.
“Where’s Fornell?”
“MTAC,” Tony and I report.
“Make the ringer thing work,” Gibbs orders us before leaving the phone on the desk while he goes up to MTAC.
“Ari’s back,” I mumble while opening the phone to see he turned it off, so I just go into setting and turn the ringer back on.
“Is it me or did he take the whole Ari situation really well?” McGee asks us.
“That’s because he’s looking forward to it,” Tony explains to him.
“Looking forward to what?”
“Finally getting to kill him. If I don’t beat him to it.” I state.
“In his home two teams. Six hours shifts, alternating radio checks every ten minutes. Outside I want a mobile foot patrol and to permanent observation posts,” Kate orders us about the protection of Gibbs because Ari has threaten Gibbs again.
“Gibbs is not going to like that,” Tony comments.
“Yeah, well, Gibbs doesn’t like Ari more,” I remind Tony.
“Well screw what he likes, Tony. I’m not going to let that psycho within five miles of Gibbs,” Kate comments.
“Well, it’s a little too late for that. His had coffee with him, shot him and been shot by him,” I state making Kate glare at me before continuing.
“McGee, I need full audio and video surveillance inside and out. Everything tied back into MTAC.”
“You’ve got it, Kate,” McGee agrees with it.
“Go home. It’s late,” Gibbs orders us.
“Gibbs, I don’t think we’re going to be going home,” Kate informs him.
“I’m staying here. I do not need an army of agents staying up all night watching me build a boat.”
“You won’t leave the building?”
“If I do, I’ll call you. Go. Go home. Get some sleep. First thing tomorrow morning we’re gonna check out Danborn Avionics and find out what the FBI missed. Go!” Gibbs orders us but we just settle into the squad room for a sleep.
We all fall asleep McGee has fallen asleep at his desk, snoring away, Tony is sleeping with his tilted back nearly horizontal. Kate is sleeping on the floor behind her desk using a jacket as a blanket.
While I am sleeping behind Gibbs’ desk with his jacket as a blanket. We are all having nightmare as Gibbs looks around at us. In the dream I am walking around an empty house but in one of the rooms I see Gibbs and Kate dead on the ground. I turn around quickly to see Ari standing there with a gun pointed at Tony who is still alive, just.

“Miss me?” Ari asks me making me gasp.

“You’re going to die,” I promise him before jerking away in surprise.

“Are you alright?” Kate asks me while I look at her in surprise and proceed to poke her to make sure she is alright and real.

“What’s going on?” McGee asks as he returns with coffee for us.

“Kate dreams about Gibbs,” Tony explains.

“No, I don’t dream about Gibbs,” Kate snaps at Tony.

“I should hope not,” I mumble.

“She screamed his name,” Tony states while not hearing me.

“Really? Here you go,” McGee exclaims while handing out the coffees.

“Look, if you want to check out the defence contracting company with us today, you’re wearing a vest,” Kate orders Gibbs while handing him a vest after he goes to put on a clean polo shirt.

“I can live with that,” Gibbs states while taking it to put it on, and then his polo shirt.

“That’s kind of the point,” I state making him give me a look. So I add, “What? If you die, that boat will never get finished and I won’t find out how you got the wood in.”

“Lieutenant Westfall was the military liaison for Danborn’s Modular UAV project. And like I told the FBI, I really doubt his murder had anything to do with it,” Eberlee, one of the workers at Danborn Avionics informs us.

“Modular UAV?” Tony asks him.

“It’s an unmanned aerial vehicle we’re developing with the navy. It can be reconfigured for different missions in the field.”

“What kind of missions?” Gibbs asks next.

“Reconnaissance, nuclear, and biological agent testing, uh… ground attack.”

“So it can be used as a weapon?” Kate asks next again.

“Someday. It’s only a prototype. Oh, and uh… before you ask. We changed all our security codes and removed Westfall’s from the system last night, follow me.”

“Any chance one of your modular UAV’s is missing?” Tony asks him.

“Nope. We only have one, and that’s her in the hanger.”

“What’s are these?” I ask while looking over the different small drones.

“Scale models we use in wind tunnel tests.”

“Any of your security systems rely on fingerprint or palm scanning technology, Mister Eberlee?” Kate asks him.

“Why?”

“Lieutenant Westfall was missing his hands,” McGee informs him.

“Someone hacked them off!” Tony adds.

“Uh… the FBI… didn’t mention that,” Eberlee exclaims.

“We did. What’s the answer?”

“Our radio flight control systems use biometrics. Only pilots entered into the system can fly them.”

“Like Westfall,” Kate states.

“Yeah. But we only have one flyable UAV and that’s it.”

“What about these?” Gibbs asks while looking at the different drones.

“Those are target drones. Danborn Avionics got its start making them in the nineteen seventies. They’re relics. They’re not operational.”

“Looks like one’s missing,” I state while looking at the empty spot.

“It was… it was probably moved.”
“Where?” Gibbs demands.
“We sometimes use it for spare parts.”
“Mm-hmm.”
“It’s not possible. I mean you need a team of engineers to get one of these heaps in flying shape. Not to mention you need a radio flight control.”
“And I’ll bet Lieutenant Westfall’s is missing,” I state.

According to these schematics, the drone’s pretty outdated from a tech perspective, Gibbs,” Abby explains in the lab while looking over the schematics of the missing drone.
“So is a hand grenade,” Gibbs informs her while standing right behind me.
“Excellent point. The Danborn TX-Bravo is basically a jet propelled RC plane. Meaning, it’s manually controlled by a radio transmitter.”
“If the transmitter they stole was from a modern UAV, they might not be able to fly it,” Kate states her question.
“True. True. But Danborn flight codes are based on the original software. So a few tweaks…”
“What’s the range?” I ask her.
“Forty miles. Unless they load it down with explosives.”
“Ah, they will,” Gibbs states.
“The payload would have to be pretty small, Gibbs. Twenty five pounds or less if they want to get it off the ground. It’s not a lot of bang for your buck.”
“It is if you’re going after a soft target, Abs.”
“Soft target?”
“People,” Kate and I inform her together.
“Oh.”
“Any way to stop it if it’s lunched?” Gibbs asks her.
“It wouldn’t be hard to destabilize the system. I have the operational frequencies. Another controller could probably jam it.”
“Get me another controller.”
“But Gibbs, there’s a catch. You’d have to be within a forty mile radius to jam it,” Abby informs Gibbs before he leave the lab. Abby stops Kate and I from leaving before informing us, “Kate, Alice, I had a weird dream about Tony last night.”
“Eeuu, not the one where the two of you were at the zoo and he,” Kate begins in disgust while I pull a face at that dream.
“Oh, no, no, no. he’s fully clothed in this one. But he had blood all over his face. I woke up crying, Kate. I never cry. Never, ever, ever,” Abby exclaims making me step forward and pull her into a hug to calm her down.
“Hey, it was just a bete noire. Gotta go,” Kate promise her before we leave after I make sure she is okay.

What do you got?” Gibbs demands of Tony as we walk into the squad room.
“A shot of our drone thieve from Danborn’s security footage from two nights ago,” Tony explains while pulling up the video.
“The day the Lieutenant were murdered,” McGee exclaims.
“Can we ID them?” I ask them softly.
“Well, they’re both wearing ski masks, but check this out. Maybe I’m paranoid, but does that guy look familiar?” Tony asks while we look at a profile of someone on the video.
“You’re not paranoid,” Gibbs begins.
“That’s bastard’s Ari!” Gibbs and I exclaim together, tightly. He’s really back and got the power to do a lot of damage, again. And the FBI is protecting him, again.
“He’s not looking for an Al Qaeda cell,” Tony comments.
“Hell, no. he’s running it! You get Fornell in here!” Gibbs orders us.
“How much should I tell him?”
“Tell him he’s about to make the second biggest mistake of his life!”

“My second biggest mistake, Jethro? That’s very dramatic. What was the first?” Fornell asks while coming to a stop next to Gibbs in MTAC.

“When you married my second wife,” Gibbs informs him making Kate and Tony look confusion but don’t saying anything.

“You could have warned me.”

“I did.”

“In my own defence, I thought he was exaggerating. He wasn’t.”

“Where’s Ari?” Fornell asks him, for once not going in on the banter.

“What part of sit this out don’t your team get?”

“The part where he steals a navy UAV and kills a whole bunch of people with it,” Gibbs informs him.

“My people checked out Danborn Avionics. Their only UAV is accounted for.”

“He stole a target drone, Fornell! Pull it up. Packed the nose of that with Semtex, he’s got a poor man’s Cruise missile.”

“Guess your boys missed it,” Tony comments.

“Ari’s playing you. He’s no double agent! He never has been! Where is he? Because last time he was in the states, he had a missile and was going to take the president out and kidnapped my sister. The time before he held Ducky, Gerald, Kate and myself hostage in autopsy, then shot Gerald, Gibbs and me. What will it take for you to stop protecting a criminal, when he takes Kate hostage again? When he kills her? Because he seems to have a habit of taking her from me and you just protect him,” I finally yell at Fornell in anger and fear but not for myself but for my sister, the only family I have had my whole life. If I hadn’t have her, I don’t know what I would do. I step forward to hit him, he is going to get Kate killed and then protect Ari and there is nothing I can do, I almost hit him but Gibbs pulls me back into his chest so I don’t hit the fucking moron.

“All we’ve got is an encrypted spook cell phone number,” Fornell admits while I try to not worry about Kate, what will Ari do to her this time?

“Patch us through,” Gibbs orders of him.

“We’re talking dedicated satellite time.”

“I’ve got two NSA satellites in range for the next five minutes, gunny. What’s the number?” Cranston asks Fornell from his spot of a video call on the screen.

“Are you sure about this?” Fornell asks Gibbs.

“As sure as when I told you she would clean out your bank account when she left,” Gibbs answers her while letting me go while pushing me towards Kate knowing she will keep me calm and not hitting Fornell.

“Patching it through now. Are you sure he’s going to answer?” Cranston asks Gibbs.

“Put my name on his caller ID. He’ll answer.”

“Special Agent Gibbs, now how did you get this number?” Ari demands of Gibbs while answering.

“I pulled some strings.”

“Yes, your friend Fornell. I imagine he is there with you.”

“Nope. Nope. I’ve been thrown off the case.”

“It’s for the best. I really wasn’t looking forward to killing you.”

“I wish I could say the same thing, Ari. I’ve resigned from NCIS.”

“I hope it wasn’t something I said.”

“Next time if we meet, Ari, it’ll be the last time. There won’t be anybody to stop me.”

“Gibbs, I’m honoured. I had no idea you made so much a,” Ari attempts to say but Gibbs gets the call hung up.

“He’s on a cell phone grid thirty miles out of Norfolk. Newport News area. I’ve got it narrowed down to a two block radius,” Cranston informs us.

“Let’s go,” Gibbs orders us as we leave.

“What the hell’s he doing in Norfolk?” Fornell demands.
“He’s going to take my sister away from me again,” I snap at the idiot as we leave MTAC to kill Ari. Do you know how to work that if we have to jam the drone, McGee?” Gibbs demands of the nerd while driving his car quickly.

“Uh, well Abby explained it to me but I’ve got to be honest with you boss. I,” McGee begins from his spot on the back seat with me surrounded by his computers and the control box. Gibbs release the steering wheel to turn around and reaches for McGee making Tony have to grab the wheel to steer as the car accelerates making McGee exclaim quickly “I’ll figure it out.” Gibbs then turns back to the wheel to drive himself again.

“What’s today’s date, Kate?” Tony asks Kate.

“May twenty fourth,” Kate answer him from between McGee and me.

“Paula Cassidy’s ship gets back from the Gulf today. We’re hooking up this weekend.”

“Well, don’t you think you should concentrate on that terrorist attack first?”

“The whole Marine Amphibious Strick Group returns today, Kate. Five ships all of them headed to Norfolk.”

“Tony, I doubt that a drone, even one packed with explosives, could do any real damage to a warship,” McGee states.

“The piers will be packed with navy families, McGee,” I snap at the geek.

“Welcoming them home,” Tony adds.

“Did you figure it out?” Gibbs snaps at McGee as we arrive on the street.

“I did. The drone is on one of three radio frequencies. It’ll take a few minutes to jam each of them. But when I hit the freq, it’s on. The drone should go off-target,” McGee reports.

“It’ll take hours to search these warehouses, boss,” Tony complains.

“Give me the shotgun,” Gibbs orders Kate who is holding a shotgun. She hands it to him and he shots out a street light making a man stick his head out of the roof before yelling behind him as Gibbs pumps the gun. He then orders us, “Tony, Alice, get the fire escape. Kate, with me. McGee, start jamming.”

We run down the alley toward the warehouse. Tony and I begin climbing up the fire escape ladders as Kate and Gibbs enter the front of the warehouse.

“Boss, they fired the drone!” McGee calls throw the radio.

“Jam it, McGee!” Gibbs orders him angrily.

We finally reach the top of our climb onto the roof, panting with exertion. Tony peers over the edge of the roof without climbing up the last bit, to see the one Gibbs has shot, Tony reports, “One down, boss. No visual on anyone else.”

“Let’s do it,” Gibbs orders Kate before stepping out onto the roof, shooting the people there. Tony and I get onto the roof and begin shooting the other people there. One of the terrorist attempt to shoot Gibbs but he takes cover before they can kill him. Kate is still using the shotgun that Gibbs returned to her, we are all shotting while the terrorist shot between each other and also returning fire. We all shoot at the terrorist with a machine gun until he drops dead. I follow Gibbs closer to the man controlling the drone. He sees us, and picks up his gun to shot at us, tony shoots another terrorist, we run to the control to see that the drone is still flying on course.

“Clear,” Tony say when there is no more terrorist.

“McGee, this thing is still flying!” Gibbs calls to McGee over the radio.

“Okay, one freq down, two to go!” McGee reports before the gunfire near him, destroying his controller. Making him have to report, “Boss, one of them shot my transmitter!”

“You know how to fly this thing?” Tony ask Gibbs who is now standing at the first controller.

“No, but I know how to crash it,” Gibbs answer him, before shooting the crap out of the controller making the drone fall into the ocean, short of the navy ship.

“McGee, are you okay?” I ask him.

“I got one terrorist inside! I font know if I got him, but he stopped shooting,” McGee answer me.

“Hold your position. We’ll flush him,” Gibbs states.
“Okay.”
“I’m out,” Gibbs states after checking his gun to see no bullets left.
“Me, too,” Kate says before see something making her yell, “Shooter.” She jumps in front of Gibbs who is the target, making Kate hit the rooftop, I’m not sure if she is dead or alive but Tony and I have to turn and shoot the shooter without being able to check on her.
“Kate?” Tony calls after the shooter is dead while we roll her onto he back to check her. The bullet was stopped by her vest but I still want her to talk.
“Are you okay?” I demand when Kate doesn’t answer Tony, I can’t lose her, I need her.
“Ow! I just got shot at point blank range, Alice. What do you think?” Kate demands of me.
“You’re not going to be going to Pilate’s class tomorrow?” Tony asks her as she gets up with a groan.
“Protection detail is over,” Gibbs orders of Kate as she stands in front of me, between Gibbs and Tony.
“You did good,” Tony adds.
“For once, DiNozzo is right.”
“Wow. I thought I’d die before I ever,” Kate begins joking but is stopped by a bullet ripping throw her smiling face. We are all covered in blood as she hits the rooftop for the second time in seconds.
“Ari,” Gibbs snaps while looking around but he can’t find him. I didn’t even think to find the fucker, I fall down next to my sister, crying. Kate is dead and she’s gone.

End Notes

Complete. please find the second book in this series. it is called Alice story part 2

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