**Tony's Little Black Book**

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| Character: | Derek Morgan, Jethro Gibbs, Alvin Olinsky, Tobias Fornell, Oliver Queen, Gillian Foster, Annie Montrose, Teddy Sanders, Jack Ryan (Jack Ryan & Related Fandoms), Stiles Stilinski, Don Eppes, Will Lexington, Q, Lynne Jacobs, Pam Swynford De Beaufort, Nathan Stark, Benji Dunn, Jane Carter (Mission: Impossible), Anthony DiNozzo, Kate Todd, Timothy McGee, Ziva David, Sam Winchester |

| Additional Tags: | unconnected one-shots, Tags to be added, Alternate Universe, Angst |
Summary

All know of Tony's reputation as a lover man. Just what names could be in his little black book? A Series of unconnected one-shots

Notes

All rights belong to the owners of the character. I only borrow them :)

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Series: Part 1 of Tales from Tony's Black Book
Stats: Published: 2016-11-13 Completed: 2017-04-07 Chapters: 51/51 Words: 108342
Content Page of Tony's Black Book

Chapter Summary

A way for Tony to keep track of the names explored, and those still to explore :D

Chapter Notes

Links in theory are active and will take you directly to that page.

Content of Tony’s Little Black Book

1. Harmon Rabb (JAG) - Sequel - Home for Good
2. Spencer Reid (Criminal Minds)
3. Steve McGarrett (Hawaii 5-0 (2010)) -Expanded full story - Are you going my way?
4. Dwayne Pride - (NCIS New Orlean) - Sequel - Wedding Chimes are ringing!
5. Danny Williams - (Hawaii 5-0 (2010)) - Festive Sequel - It's beginning to feel like ...
6. Leon Vance - (NCIS) - Sequel - Terms of Agreement
7. John Sheppard - (Stargate Atlantis) - Expanded full story - Out of place
8. Mike Ross - (Suits)
9. Lucifer Morningstar - (Lucifer)
10. Jack O’Neill - (Stargate SG1)
11. Steve McGarrett 2 - (Hawaii 5-0 (2010))
12. Kelly Severide - (Chicago Fire)
13. Greg House - (House M.D)
14. Hank Voight - (Chicago P.D)
15. Tobias Fornell - (NCIS) - Sequel - The New Gibbs' Rule
16. Oliver Queen - (Arrow TV) - Sequel - You got some explaining to do!
17. Raymond “Red” Reddington - (The Blacklist)
18. Eliot Spencer - (Leverage) - Sequel - Revenge of the Boyfriend
19. Mark Watney - (The Martian) - Expanded full story - A Love to Mars and Back
20. Mark Watney 2 - Part Two- (The Martian)
21. Cal Lightman - (Lie to Me) -Sequel - The Return of Agent DiNozzo ... sort of
22. Jack Ryan - (Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit)
23. Sheriff Stilinski - (Teen Wolf) - Festive Sequel: Alternate Uses of Mistletoe
24. Aaron Hotch - (Criminal Minds) -Expanded full story - Home is Where the Heart is
25. Ian Edgerton - (N3mbers)
26. Will Lexington (Nashville)
27. David Rossi (Criminal Minds)
28. James Bond (Bond Movies)
29. Mycroft Holmes - (Sherlock BBC) - Prequel - The Shield and the Sword
30. Rodney McKay - (Stargate Atlantis) - Expanded full story - Like 'Em Mean
31. Neal Caffrey - (White Collar) - Expanded full story - Hot Under the Collar
32. James Wilson (House M.D) -
33. Tom Morrow (NCIS) - Prequel - Don't get no better
Phase Two is now in operation with the next stories in the collection opening to tons of more pairings but with a slightly more specialized perspective.
So Glad (Harmon Rabb)

1. So Glad (Harmon Rabb)

Harmon Rabb was wondering why he had ever accepted the promotion to JAG (it seemed like a good idea at the time). A phone call broke his concentration but he welcomed the distraction especially seeing the caller ID. It was okay, it was only paperwork. “Why hello sexy?”

“I hope you don’t greet the phone like that normally?”

Rabb snorted at his husband’s question. “No Luv, we already established that I don’t share.”

“So, I spoke to Mac today and she likes me enough to get me a warrant.”

Ah, so Tony knew the gossip would have no doubt reached his ears and wanted to make sure he was okay. Rabb didn’t blink. He knew Tony was a flirt but that was okay because he always came home to him. Tony’s team had no clue and that made Harmon a little sad because they were supposed to be the top investigators and yet Tony had pulled the wool over their eyes for years.

Rabb smirked because he knew that his husband was a charming man. “Yes, I heard. It’s nice to know your new conquest is my best friend.”

Tony stopped and nearly choked at just the thought. Jesus, they thought he’d hit on Mac. He wasn’t that brave. Tony knew Mac was no doubt laughing about it or adding fuel to ridiculous rumours. She had no doubt teased Harmon about it, saying how Tony would run away with her. “Now, you know that is not true.”

Harmon snickered, “Did I break you?”

“No, Mona you didn’t,” Tony reassured him. Ah, so this week he was Mona.

Rabb had to laugh at that one. “So I am Mona today?”

“Yeah, I can’t wait for you to show me everything you want to do to me.”

Wow. Harmon knew Tony was a good undercover agent. He was showing off his skills. His husband was talking to him in the middle of an office full of investigators. All whilst maintaining the reputation of being the ultimate ladies man. It was quite funny, Rabb hoped he was there when the secret was finally let out of the bag.

This was their fifth anniversary and Harmon wanted to celebrate. He could have a little bit of fun. “You know I have so many plans... I am going to strip you out of your clothes ever so slowly. I want the tension to build. I will kiss every inch of you and bite every mole I can find.”

Tony’s breathing hitched. You would have to be listening closely to know it. “Yeah?”

“Oh yeah, I am going to, oh, so, slowly rim you and when I think you are ready ... I will split you wide open. I will then make the most exquisite love to you I can.”

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Tony was so glad he was sitting at his desk. It would give him a chance to calm his body. He had an incentive to finish this case. There was no way he wanted to miss his husband and their anniversary.

If anyone had watched Tony in that moment they would have seen him touch a set of dog-tags. The wedding ring was attached to the chain as well. He would always have it on his body in order to keep Harmon close. It would have been around his neck but the shirt would have shown it today.

*He was never so glad Gibbs arrested the wrong man all those years ago.*

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Now with a bonus sequel short - *Home for Good*
"I make Geeks look good." (Dr. Spencer Reid)

Chapter Summary

Derek Morgan could not believe what he was seeing. He was so proud pretty boy was growing up and taming one of the wildest men in all the Alphabet agencies.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Bobdog54 who requested one of the Criminal Mind guys. I chose Spencer Reid.

2. I make Geeks look good  (Spencer Reid)

Derek Morgan was playing basketball with another agent. You could tell the difference in skill between their one on one game and the others practicing. Derek and Tony would run rings around the entire group. Spencer had come down to the court to pass on a message. He forgot for a few seconds just watching the skillful game. Plus, Derek's friend was attractive to watch for more than just his prowess with the ball.

Tony stopped for water, “So how is life with the Feeb’s?”

Derek snorted, “You could find out yourself, the offer is still open.”

Tony had to laugh as Rossi always tried to get him whenever he collected Derek from the office. He could profile. It would be fun to put the doctorate he’d earned to good use. He just didn’t see a way to break free from NCIS with his conscience clear. He wasn’t saying that in a bad way. He did good work with the Agency and the work was important. “Maybe someday ... When I can’t wait to tell Vance to shove it.”

If the man didn't stop riding his ass. Tony would be doing it sooner rather than later.
“You’re not there yet?” Morgan asked him in surprise.

Tony shrugged, “Being afloat sucked but it did give me the time to finish my dissertation.”

“You’re a geek, Dr. Dinozzo.” Morgan teased.

Tony laughed, “Please, I make geeks look good.”

It was then the voice to the side of the court said, “Yes, you do.”

Tony looked at him. He knew Spencer from all the stories Derek told him. Yes, he was cute and adorable. A true genius by all accounts. What Derek never said was how damn adorable he was, with the glasses and floppy hair. Tony could feel his charming smile starting. He nixed it. This guy was going to get the real him. He ignored Derek for a few moments. They had been friends since college so he could take it.

“Why hello Dr. Reid. I’m pleased to meet you.”

A frown marred Spencer’s features, Tony didn’t like seeing it. He wanted the other expression back. “Are you okay Dr. Reid?”

The Agent held his hand out in shock, “Yes sorry, I don’t know your name. I’m just surprised you know of me ... And it is Spencer.”

Tony grinned, “Agent Tony DiNozzo. Call me Tony, please. Oh, and I get to hear all about how Agent Prettyboy keeps stealing all the best girls.”

Spencer blushed. He was sure he was being hit on but he wasn’t certain. He returned the
compliment hoping to learn a little more. “You don’t have any problem in that regard do you?”

Tony shrugged, “Guilty even the right guy on occasion.”

Spencer leaned forward and asked. “Are you the same Dr. DiNozzo who published the thesis on profiling and its uses in improving Federal cooperation?”

Tony put a finger to his lips, “Shh, I won’t be able to keep pretending to be a jock.”

Spencer laughed, “Your secret is safe with me. Can we discuss your theories over lunch?”

Tony needed a change and maybe this was it. He was back in DC but he still felt alienated from his team. He would get it back but it was exhausting keeping all his masks in place. “Sure. Let me get your number and we can arrange a date.”

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Derek’s eyebrows raised further and further as the conversation progressed. He was watching his friend, Tony, show genuine affection and flirt with a rare honesty. There was also the part where Pretty Boy was growing up. He was so proud. He took a quick snap to show Pene’ the new couple he could see forming before his eyes. Damn, he never would have thought Tony would settle down after Wendy. Trust Spencer to be the one to break through those walls. Oh, he knew it was early days but he could see it.
Are you going my way? (Steve McGarrett)

Chapter Summary

Tony nodded, suddenly a little shy. This was Steve’s family and he wanted them to like him. “You going me way Sailor?”

“Oh yeah,” Steve said, his voice dropping an octave.

Chapter Notes

This fic is for Rodney215

(A/N: Timeline for both shows is post, Agent Afloat / Somalia and S1 H50. Also, be warned, this does not reflect kindly on Gibbs.)

“Are you going my way ...” (Steve McGarrett)

Tony finished the last bit of paperwork with a flourish. “I am out of here and on my way to Hawaii.”

Ziva frowned but couldn't help adding with vicious glee. “You are taking a holiday alone?”

Ah, so barbs are out nice and early. You would think with all he had done in helping her get back from Somalia, she would have warmed to him. She hadn't and Tony didn’t care, which was somehow worse. It was crazy.

He was glad to take his holiday time and get the hell out of dodge. He kept getting funny looks, he was adept at diverting attention. “Well, I won’t be lonely for too long.”

McGee rolled his eyes, “And there is the lovable leech we have come to know.”

Tony’s eyes hardened for just a second. No-one apart from Gibbs noticed. What was wrong with that comment? Tony traded on the reputation. Tony shouldn’t be mad if someone called him on it. There was something wrong but Gibbs couldn't remember what.

He watched his SFA closely, he was happy, full of excited energy. He couldn't remember the last time he'd seen that look on Tony's face.

“Gibbs, can I go check in with Ducky? He wants to make sure I am okay for Hawaii.”
Gibbs raised an eyebrow, “Not if in your slacking I have paperwork outstanding.”

Tony rolled his eyes and there was that look again. Still, Tony was respectful as he answered his boss. “Well, you will find all reports closed out and the monthly SFA paperwork was done. Plus, there is an extra coffee to sweeten the deal.”

Gibbs sighed, “Get out of here DiNozzo.”

Tony couldn't move fast enough. It was odd.

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Gibbs had been unable to shake the feeling so he followed Tony down to autopsy. He could hear the conversation and he knew it was private. A good man would have turned around but he stayed. He needed some questions answered about Tony and this seemed to be the only way it would happen.

“How are you doing my boy?” Ducky asked, with paternal affection.

Tony had a wistful sigh, “He doesn’t remember me. He got me back from the boat because it was expected ... not because he remembers our love.”

Ducky patted Tony’s slumped shoulders. “I know how much dealing with everything after the explosion tore at you.”

Tony chuckled but it was void of any warmth. “He promised to stay with me forever. I let him keep us secret. Do you know when I went around to his house I found all my stuff destroyed?”

Anyone who had seen Gibbs in that moment would have been shaken. There was no aggressive second B is for bastard agent. He was pale and shaken. He remembered coming home and having a meltdown. He’d destroyed a whole bunch of items but he thought they were relics of the person he’d loved so they had to belong to Shannon. Shannon had been all he could think about after the fire. Could they have been Tony’s?

Ducky sighed as there was just no easy answer. He did care for Anthony like one of his own. He knew why Gibbs had done it and it was not what Tony thought. Still, with Tony’s insecurities from early traumas like his father and Wendy, Tony could only see the bleak picture of Gibbs having never loved him at all and leaving him just like all the rest.

The medical examiner tried to lighten Tony’s mood. “You managed to find someone who cares a great deal for you on the Seahawk.”

Tony laughed, “Oh, he is a big bad navy seal. It's cute, he is wrapped around his best friend’s six-year-old daughter.”

Tony had had a crap case. He’d got home tired and wary and the photo Steve had sent him had made his day. There was his big bad boyfriend dressed for a girls princess party.
Ducky chuckled, “So why are you talking to an old man when you could be getting on a plane to see your young man?”

Tony laughed, “I’m gone.”

Gibbs had waited. He had too much on his mind to protest what was happening. His mind was whirling.

“Come out Jethro.”

Jethro slunk out of the shadow’s, much like a kicked puppy. “Why did no one tell me?”

Ducky frowned, “At what part? When you demoted him and threw his things on his desk. Maybe when you laid into him due to an unsanctioned operation made by your ex. After all, she used the fact he was still grieving the loss of your relationship.”

Gibbs hadn’t seen his actions like that. It wasn’t that bad. “Didn’t I have a right to know?”

Ducky snorted, “He thought you would take his head off. You appeared to hate him, or, at least that is what he thought. He grieved your ‘something’ relationship for too long as it was Jethro.”

“But he has moved on.”

Ducky rolled his eyes, “Was he supposed to wait for you to pull your head out of his ass?”

There was no good answer.

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Eight hours later, Tony was standing in the palace, where 5-0 operated out of. He was leaning attractively against the wall (Kono’s words.)

Danny was unwilling to let the stranger go uncontested, no matter how cute he may be. “Can we help you?”

“You’re not my sailor?” The handsome man pouted.
Danny raised an eyebrow because he could be talking about Steve. “No, I am not. What I am is Detective Danny Williams and you still haven’t introduced yourself.”

He was quite the spitfire, just like Steve described. “I am kosher.” He reached into his pocket of his light cargo pants. “I’m Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo.”

Danny frowned, “You’re Steve’s, Tony?”

Tony smirked, “Yeah, I am.”

That was all the cop needed to hear. “Rambo! Your Agent is here.”

Steve came out of his office. His face severe, about to rant at Danno for his army quip, he knows how much it bugs him. No respect. All those thoughts disappeared the minute he saw Tony, he no longer had to worry about DADT. His smile couldn't get any bigger as he hugged his boyfriend, “Tony, you’re here.”

Tony nodded, suddenly a little shy. This was Steve’s family and he wanted them to like him. “Going my way Sailor?”

“Oh yeah,” Steve said, his voice dropping an octave.

Kono wanted to fan herself. The sexual tension was thick in the air and if it got any hotter the sprinklers would activate. This was fantasy material right here. She was polite, “I am Kono, this is my cousin, Chin-Ho. How long are you here for?”

Tony smiled and it was radiant. “That is up to sailor here. He has a week to convince me that I should stay.”

This is now an expanded story where you can see how it all began and what happens after - here
The best thing in New Orleans (Dwayne Pride)

Chapter Summary

The team still hadn’t figured out why each break Tony disappeared New Orleans. It turns out, the no pressure thing turned into something a hell of a lot deeper.

Chapter Notes

So canon is fluid in this ficlet. This chapter is for I_Kill_Zombies - I hope you enjoy.

The Best thing in New Orleans. (Dwayne Pride)

Tony hated going through that ship. He hated that every time something vaguely plague like came to being - he was the go-to guy. He may act like nothing touches him. It did. The plague had to be one of the scariest things he’d gone through. Even to this day, he was not sure how he made it through.

He’d been a good agent and got the job done. As a result, Tony needed a drink and to unwind. He’d asked a local with a grin about the best place to drink with an open piano. He loved playing the piano and knew he was good at it. He just didn’t share this with anyone. It was too personal. It was the last thing he’d shared with his mother.

The bar he found from the instructions. It was a run down dive bar. It hadn’t set out that way. It had just not seen any renovations in the last fifty years or so, Tony was guessing. Still, the Old Truetone was still standing. Tony liked it, it showed the place still had a heart.

He walked in and spied the piano. He whistled in appreciation. There stood as promised, a well kept black piano grand. It was at odds with the rest of the place. Well kept and tidy.

The bartender looked up, “You play?”

Tony was wistful, “If I get the chance, my apartment is too small. I had to put mine in storage.” He confessed.
The barkeeper gave him a searching look, “You play well and your drinks will be on the house.”

Tony couldn’t believe he was that lucky. He was itching to get his hands on those ivory keys. He was hoping that as his fingers raced over the keys his stress would disappear.

It worked, he didn’t even look at the clock. He had a hotel room and would find his way back when he was ready. He had a ready repertoire of songs stuck in his head.

An hour later, he stops so he can finish his whiskey. Only he hears clapping from behind him. Tony whirls around to see Agent Pride. “Hello, Agent Pride, what brings you here?”

The agent chuckled, “I have a family connection.”

Tony is pointed in the direction of a photo. It shows a young woman, quite the looker, singing. To the side of the photo, you can see a boy sitting on the speaker. “That you Pride?”

“It is, and it is, Dwayne.”

Tony acquiesced, “Then please call me, Tony.”

Dwayne slid alongside the bench. Tony could recognise a fellow player. They say at ease on the piano bench. Dwayne teased him, “So you think you can keep up, huh?”

Tony laughed and was ready to take up the challenge. The bar got quite the treat. The two players challenged each other. They didn’t miss a beat. They played in perfect sync. It was quite something. They looked up to see the bar full, whereas it had been almost empty when they started. The applause surprised them and Tony found himself blushing.

Dwayne liked the look on the Agent. He found himself wondering how far the blush went down his body. He was divorced not dead.

Tony gave a bow to the crowd and headed to the bar. He needed a drink. It was a good job that he was not working again until Monday. It was part of the deal he’d worked with Vance.
Dwayne followed him. “So what are you trying to chase away?”

Tony shrugged, “Normal demons. I don’t like thinking about Y-pestis.”

Pride nodded, as it more than made sense. “I’m sorry you had to relive it.”

Tony smiled, telling the Agent was being sincere. “Yep, it sucks. Still, it is not all bad. I got to come to one of my favourite cities.”

Dwayne liked Tony even more. He loved people who loved the city as much as him. “Well, you are always welcome here.”

Tony just smiled again, he wasn’t sure how to respond. He knew Pride was an old friend of Gibbs, and judging by the wedding band gap in his tan, there was an ex-wife in the mix. Still, Tony was only too happy to give the Agent a chance to vent. “So what are you doing here?”

“I come here when I want to think,” Dwayne answered him.

Tony didn’t know why he was doing this. He found himself talking with ease. It was odd. This wasn’t him and yet there was something about Pride that set him at ease. “And what have you figured out?”

“I’m ready to move on. I can’t stay holed up in my office.” The look in his eyes left Tony no illusion in how he wanted to move on.

Tony raised his glass. “Well, you have learnt that one quicker than Gibbs.”

“He was always a stubborn cuss.”

Tony choked on his drink. “Jesus, warn a guy.”

Dwayne smirked, “Why? It would spoil my fun.”
“You are an evil man,” Tony observed.

Tony recognised the moves. He’d pulled them often enough. The furtive looks, the focus on his lips. For once, he wasn’t the chaser, he was the chasee. He had enough liquor in him to be braver but not enough to forget this. “So care to show me the city from your point of view?”

The grin he got made the walk all the more worthwhile. Tony listened as Pride showed him his favorite places. It was easy to get caught up in his enthusiasm. They were walking close enough to keep bumping into each other.

Pride had done the circuit back to Tony’s hotel. Pride grinned at him, “If I make a pass, will Jethro come after me?”

Tony found he didn’t much care what Gibbs wanted right now. “I won’t make life difficult with your friend,” Tony said. Still, he wasn’t going to let Gibbs scare away something good. He finished, “But I hope I can help you move on.”

There it was. The offer. Tony was not offering anything scary or long term. Dwayne took his hand and followed him into the hotel.

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The team still hadn’t figured out why each break Tony disappeared New Orleans. It turns out, the no pressure thing turned into something a hell of a lot deeper.

Vance for once was only too happy to ignore the queries and gossiping of McGee and Davids. If they couldn’t figure it out, then they didn’t need to know. He cheated as he had the next of kin paperwork. He and DiNozzo had come to an agreement. He gave him the details and they would split the betting pool.

With the engagement, it wouldn't be too long.

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Now with Bonus Sequel - Wedding Chimes are ringing!
Chapter Summary

Tony wanted to forget Jenny and the fiasco. Danny wanted to forget the fact soon his baby girl would be six thousand miles away.

Together, they might just find something amazing.

Chapter Notes

The chapter is for Lidil and Jewelbaby who requested Danny Williams/Tony

One good turn deserves another - (Danny Williams)

Danny “Danno” Williams was not having a good day. He was stuck in San-Francisco for the evening. Oh, and his bitch of an ex-wife had managed to convince a judge she should take his beloved Grace to Hawaii. So now his reason for living was going to be six thousand miles away with an ocean between them.

It couldn’t happen. He had to find a way to get to her. She would grow up thinking Step-Stan was the only one who cared. That was wrong.

He had no idea how this news equated into finding a bar. It did. He was going with the tried and tested way of drinking his problems away. He would wake up tomorrow with a blinding headache and be an adult once more. No one could ask any more from him.

Danny watched an attractive guy walk into the bar. Danny gave the guy an appreciative once over. He didn't know the guy but he knew how to wear a suit. The suit was worth more than he would ever make in a year. Then again, that might just be because the guy was so damn attractive.

Danny had never cared about the gender, just how they acted. He liked them pretty, a little mean and a lot snarky.

“I think you are in the wrong bar my friend.” Danny was proud of the way he wasn't slurring. It told
him he was no way drunk enough. He needed another drink.

Tony snorted, “And with that accent, you are a long way from home.”

Danny shifted, surprised by the observation. “San-Francisco is as good as place as any.”

Tony looked at the guy, short, blonde and packing an attitude that would impress even Gibbs. It was crazy he liked the guy already. He wanted to find out more. After all, tomorrow Tony was going to be stuck on a boat. He'd come out seeking a little fun before his tour started. If the bar offered a chance for him to forget about Jenny, all the better.

“No, I am exactly where I want to be.” Tony replied, “Anthony DiNozzo.” He offered his hand, and his new friend shook it.

Danny knew of a Tony DiNozzo. He was a legend in cop circles. The guy went under in a mob family and brought the whole thing down. You had to be one ballsy guy to manage that. “You the same DiNozzo who went mob hunting in Philly.”

Tony chuckled, “Small world. You a cop?”

Danny smirked, “Detective Daniel Williams. New Jersey PD.”

Tony looked at the bartender. “Two drinks of whatever he is having.”

Danny was starting to like the guy more. He was gorgeous and generous with his drinks. “Thanks.”

Tony shrugged it off. He sat by him at the bar. Tony liked the look of the guy. Still, a bisexual or gay cop had to be careful. Tony wouldn't push too quick as he didn't want a fist in the face. All he said in return was, “You looked like a guy who could use a drink.”

“You a shrink now?”
DiNozzo laughed and it sent a shiver down Danny’s spine. The guy was good and didn’t blink at his sarcasm. “Just a masters, that I find useful as a Federal Agent, NCIS.”

Danny rolled his eyes, “Let me guess. Fleet weeks so you are shipping out?”

He smirked at Danny, “You are good. Yep, sixteen week Agent Afloat assignment.”

Escape sounded pretty good right now to Danny Williams. No, that was the coward's way out. “Is the boat going towards Hawaii?”

Pretty boy frowned and Danny found himself not liking it. He liked Tony smiling even if he himself didn’t feel like smiling. “Don’t think so. Pretty specific. So why do you want to head there besides the obvious.”

Danny found himself venting. He told this stranger everything. All about Rachel, and Grace and the whole bitter affair. He figured Tony didn't expect it but was glad for the chance to vent. He felt drained afterwards.

Tony felt for the guy. You didn’t need to be good at reading people to know he loved his daughter with all his heart. It made him even more attractive. Tony was no stranger to men, and more than a few of the Sam's he’d dated had not been short for anything. He just let his team-mates draw their own conclusions.

Tony wanted to see where he stood. He was bolder than he would normally be, the idea of being stuck on the boat making him so. “You know, I was just wondering ... Has the Shrew put you off women?”

Danny rolled his eyes, it was not the smoothest line but he could take pity on Tony. It helped that he was so cute. “When the men are as cute as you, sure.”

Danny was rewarded with the brightest and truest smile. Damn, he was lost. Tony was handsome but with that smile he was stunning. Danny found his pants tightening just looking.

Drinks turned into more. Turned into a fumble in the alley. Danny was lost in a sea of lust. This Adonis of a man was a gift from the gods, Danny was sure of it. He didn’t want it to stop. He said as much.
Tony wasn’t going to stop unless Danny freaked out. It happened in the past when a guy wasn’t so sure of their sexuality. Danny talked with his hands but now he was letting his hands do the talking.

Tony’s body was singing with how well Danny was playing it. He was glad that he splurged on the hotel room. It was as sensuous as hell against his body. Tony let go and gave himself over to the pleasure. He collapsed back in a sweaty sated mess. He pulled Danny close to him. They both deserved a good night of sleep.

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Come morning, Tony woke and stretched. He didn’t see the points in modesty considering what they had gotten up to the evening before.

He let Danny sleep and slipped into the shower. He had an hour before he had to report to the ship. It was a good job that he had picked the hotel for its proximity to the ship.

He picked his phone up and called his old Captain. Tony had parted on good terms with the guy and laughed when he’d transferred to Hawaii. It could come in handy at times.

“Hey Captain, it's Tony.”

“What can I do for you DiNozzo?”

Tony winced as he wasn’t sure just what he should say. Danny had told him several things in confidence and he wouldn’t break it. “I’m asking if you have any transfer spots open for Detectives.”

“You asking for yourself?”

Tony chuckled as every phone call, there was always one job offer from the Captain. He just got it in earlier than usual. “No Cap, for a friend. His little girl’s mom has just taken them off to Hawaii
and he doesn’t want to be so far away.”

There was a pause. Tony wasn’t stupid enough to interrupt the guys’ thinking time. “Give me a name, and give him my number. I will check him out and talk to him myself.”

Tony could have whooped with joy. “It’s Detective Danny Williams. New Jersey PD.”

The Captain snorted, “Go do what you do DiNozzo.”

Tony was dressed and bounced back into the room. Danny was only just walking up and even all fuzzy hair and growls face. He was still damn cute. “You need to phone this number.”

Danny frowned as he was not awake. “You gave me your phone number last night.”

Tony rolled his eyes, “I know and I will message you when I make port.”

“So what is this phone number?”

Tony tried to play it cool. “It is the number of Captain DeMarco Hawaii PD. He said to give him a call.”

Now Danny was alert, “How?”

Tony smiled, “I am a sucker for a happy ending. And the Captain used to be my boss I just gave him a call. The rest is up to you.”

Danny wasn’t stunned too often or struggled to find words to express himself. Today was a rare day. This gorgeous attractive guy had waltzed into his life. He’d sexed him up pretty good. He’d helped him forget about Rachel and helped him to solve the problem about Grace.

He surged forward, kissing the life out of Tony. It was lust and thanks, all rolled into one. He hated that they would have to part ways after today. There was a little voice in his head telling him it didn’t
have to be that way.

Tony laughed, “Be happy and give us a call once in awhile.”

*****

At the start of the year, Danny had not expected to move to Hawaii and start a relationship with a new man. It was all good. The USS Seahawk had docked and the crew of the ship was being given liberty. Tony whilst not Navy was also subject to rest days.

Danny was waiting for Tony to come off the ship. They had had only one night and many skype sessions. It wasn’t all one way. It was great, Grace loved Tony. It helped that Grace was aware of what part Tony had played in getting him to Hawaii.

Danny’s life changes were not over. There was another person who disembarked off the boat at the same time as Tony. A seal by the name of Lieutenant Commander Steve McGarrett.

Danny would be forever grateful for his relationship later that year. Tony helped Steve get acquitted of all charges thanks to the help from Gibbs, Tony’s boss.

___________________________________

Author’s Note: I definitely want to expand this fic later on. :D
Chapter Summary

He’d heard all about Tony’s athleticism but to see it was better. Leon was a widower, not dead. He could appreciate a stunning man or woman. You would have to be dead not to see that Tony was attractive.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Jewelbaby and W_illow950 who challenged an idea of Tony/Vance. It was the challenge that intrigued me but a preview of titles to come from prompts so far ... as they are written (Not necessarily publishing order)... 

Stick together (Marty Deeks)
When it is right ...It is right (Dwayne Pride 2)
Ways to say I love you. (Tobias Fornell)
Too pretty for mere mortals (Oliver Queen)
Play the Game - (Trent Kort)
Love Hurts - (Ari Haswari)
Game on (Derek Morgan)
Movie Matinee (Mike Ross)

Power of Sports (Leon Vance)

Leon was no stranger to death. He had seen more than a few deaths during his career. It wasn’t supposed to be this hard. His wife, Jackie, was dead because of a crazed terrorist. He wanted revenge, he wanted so many things.

What he wanted more than most was Jackie to be alive. Grief was a dangerous and all too consuming emotion.

He’d sanctioned the mission for Ziva if he’d been thinking straight - He would have never done it.

“Can I help you Agent DiNozzo?”

Vance was getting tired of seeing sympathetic looks. He didn't pity. He needed a time machine.
Failing that, he would accept working himself to exhaustion. He noted there was no look of pity on DiNozzo's face. It made him like the guy that bit more.

“I would like to see Jared. He sent an email asking about basketball. I didn't want to step on anyone’s toes.” DiNozzo looked at his shoes unwilling to do something that would persuade the Director to say no. Jared had reached out to him, that one time he had been on protection duty. He didn't want to let the boy down especially so given the loss of his mother.

Vance nodded his head and spoke up, “I think Jared would welcome the distraction.”

Tony nodded, “Thanks, I will stay out of your way, Director. I know you’re not fond of me.”

Vance winced as he couldn’t deny it. He did ask one thing, it was bugging him. “Why haven’t you gone with Agent Davids?”

Tony froze and for once there was quick no reply. He took a measured breath and spoke with a quiet conviction. “I am a cop first and I swore an oath to protect the law. Ziva’s mission is necessary for her but not one I can support.”

Vance knew he was teetering on the edge. He’d been wanting revenge. It was this quiet measured response that stopped him short. He said nothing because DiNozzo wouldn’t know how to handle his truth.

He got in contact with SecNav, he needed to take more time off. He had to be there for his kids. He needed to get his head on right. When things calmed down he would thank DiNozzo for helping him screw his head on straight.

****

Vance had found DiNozzo to be good company. He had stayed out of the way, choosing to focus on the kids. He'd found out that DiNozzo had many things in common with his children. DiNozzo had shared stories of his own mother who had also died when he was a child.

It may have started off with Jared asking for help with his game but little Kayla refused to be left out. She had wanted to play soccer at school. DiNozzo had shrugged and offered to help her, which is what had led to the scene Leon was watching.
DiNozzo had stripped off his suit jacket and was running around the pitch. He was chased by both Jared and Kayla, whose task was to get the ball off him. It was a fun scene, and Leon smiled at the open joy. There had been too little joy. He still missed Jackie but was seeing he had to drag himself back into life. After all, his children deserved nothing less.

It was that day that saw a turning point in his relationship with Tony. After dinner, which he’d insisted the Agent stay for. He’d offered him a beer. He’d seen the look of shock. It had been just a moment but Tony had taken the drink and not made a big deal about the gesture.

It set a new pattern for their interactions. Once a week, Tony would come by when they were on downtime. He would play with Jared and Kayla. He showed them his repertoire of tricks in whatever sport they were curious on. He’d heard all about Tony’s athleticism but to see it was better. Leon was a widower, not dead. He could appreciate a stunning man or woman. You would have to be dead not to see that Tony was attractive.

After sports came food and conversation. It later on turned into watching sports on his large TV.

Leon was never fond of trite statements but it was nice. Tony had let him dictate the path of their friendship, never demanding anything. Leon was a lucky man that Tony was the forgiving sort.

If the day after the realisation, he looked up the fraternisation regs once more. Well, that was between him and the archivist.

****

A year later, and nothing had changed. Tony was still a fixture in his children’s life, they called him, Uncle Tony. Leon had kept expecting Tony to tell him about another woman but there was no one. If he was secretly pleased, then that was between him and his conscience.

Jared raced into his home office. “Dad, dad, can I call Tony, please?”
Well, that was new. Leon looked at his son brimming with excitement and he wanted to know why. “Sure thing, do I get to know why?”

“I made the senior team.”

Now Leon would always be proud of his kids no matter what. Still, Jared had managed quite the feat. He was a junior and managed to make the senior team. Now, he understood why Jared wanted to talk to Tony.

Jared hadn’t lost any of his excitement as he chatted to Tony. He looked up, “Can Uncle Tony come to the game? He may have a case but he said to ask you first Dad.”

Leon found himself unwilling to say no. If there was any way he could help Tony, he would abuse his position. He would do a lot to keep that smile on his son’s face.

****

Tony was at headquarters, he’d slogged through his paperwork the night before. He’d even traded his favour with Balboa for his team to be the one on call. He kept getting inquisitive looks from Gibbs.

“You got a hot date or something?”

Tony looked up from his paperwork. “I’m not following boss.”

Yes, he was following. The only defense he had was ignorance. He just hoped he could fool Gibb’s infamous gut.

“You have an air of happiness. So what’s her name?”
Tony shrugged, “I’m not sure if I follow. I am going to watch a basketball game.”

Truth. Misdirect. He couldn’t say why those words had set off his emotions. A date, christ it had been way too long since he’d been on one of those. In fact, he’d blown off the last one to teach Kayla how to swing a baseball. He’d been calling her little slugger ever since. The smile on her face and the laughter made it well worth it.

“A basketball game?”

Tony nodded, “I realised how long it has been since I saw a game. I thought it would take the opportunity to see a game.”

Gibbs wouldn’t get it out of Tony if he was unwilling to share. His agent was too good for that, he’d watched Tony run rings around the head of Mossad after all. “Is that why all my paperwork is complete early?”

Tony nodded, handing over the last of it with a flourish. “Bye probie, Bye probish. Have fun.”

Gibbs had no reason to keep him and let him go. Still, there was something niggling his senses. Tony had calmed down a lot in the last year and he couldn’t the last date he’d spoken about. He didn’t think Tony had not dated at all. Tony just cared more about whoever it was. They were worth more to him than idle gossip.

*

Later that evening, he watched Vance come down the steps. Gibbs was the last one in the office. Vance came over to him, “You going home?”

“Paperwork needs doing.”

Vance sighed, as he was too stubborn to listen. He just said, “Well, I have a game to get to. Jared is playing.”

Gibbs’ head shot up, connecting dots. Nah, they didn’t add up. There was no way Tony was going to Jared’s game was there?
Vance knew his protection detail were close. The handy thing about Tony watching the game meant they didn't have to stand so close. Tony was always armed and so was he.

Tony had handed him a drink as soon as he sat down. It was soda as it was a high school game.

"Thanks, so how did Gibbs take you leaving on time."

Tony smirked, "He asked me about my date."

Vance didn't freeze. He'd been looking for an opening to test the waters. "Well, I think I can do better than my kid's basketball game."

Kayla giggled at the look of shock on Tony's face. "Daddy, you broke Uncle Tony."

Leon hugged her close, "Nah slugger. I just gave him something to think about."

Kayla wasn't too convinced. She was protective of Tony, he'd helped her get onto the soccer team. "Are you sure?"

It was Tony that dug him out of his hole, "Yeah Kayla your Dad just let me figure something out."

Leon discovered a few things that basketball match. Tony had the sweetest shyest smile he'd ever seen. He didn't know Tony had it in him. He liked the fact he was seeing a different side to his mercurial agent.

Tony had the car ride to get his thoughts together. He liked Leon at home. The man was a good family man. He was aware of what his kids had sacrificed for his job and did his best to make up for it.

Tony had locked his attraction up in a box that said, Director do not touch. He realised tonight that
it didn't have to be. They could keep work and their personal life's separate. They'd proved that over the last year as no one at NCIS even had a clue about their friendship. Could he do this? They wouldn't be the only ones affected if it went wrong.

The car pulled up and the kids raced inside eager to get food and movies.

Vance hung back, his protection detail taking their usual places. He was nervous and eager. He hadn't felt like this in a long. Tony tugged his hand to get his attention. He saw those expressive green eyes and let himself fall.

The kiss was soft and full of promise. Tony sighed as he broke the kiss. He wanted more, so much more but he wouldn't rush it. "So are you going to show me a real date?"

Vance chuckled, "Yeah, I will show you style."

Tony waltzed off, "Promises, promises." Tony may have put a bit more swagger in his step to emphasise his ass.

The future was looking bright.

_______________________________________________________________________________________

However feel free to check out my Tumblr, Facebook, and Twitter pages to find out about fic updates, see sneak peeks at works in progress and ask any questions that you might have!
Out of Place (John Sheppard)

Chapter Summary

Tony was looking for a place where he fit. He didn't realise he would have to go to the ass end of the galaxy to find it.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for RainyDayReader, Merrygal and Brent1

Out of Place (John Sheppard)

Tony had found a bar off a side alley because right now, a drink seemed like a good idea. He was once again getting shipped out like a naughty schoolboy. The others took it harder than he did. He’d seen the look in Gibbs’ eyes. Tony could tell that Gibbs blamed him for the Director’s death.

He had too. Still, for once he’d gone to counselling. It had done him good. It had been like pulling teeth and painful beyond belief. He’d persevered as he was unhappy with his life and needed a fresh perspective. When the ship assignment had come in, he’d almost picked up his resignation letter ready to quit. It would serve them all right. He hadn’t, Tony would leave with his head high. Rachel, Cate’s sister had helped him realise that is what he wanted.

So here he was, San-Francisco, during Fleet Week. The whole place was one walking cliche. The only improvement was since DADT, people were freer with what they wanted. He’d seen more than a few, couples of every variety and the odd trio. Tony didn’t care as long as everyone was legal and consenting. It was all cool in his book. It was not his place to judge.

The bar he was drinking at was a quaint dive. It had a character that Tony adored. He had many questions he needed to think about, the USS Seahawk, would give him space to think. He got more than the odd look. The trouble for Tony it was more, ‘what is a guy like you drinking here’.

Whereas, he was looking for a good night of fun.

The door opened and a group of Marines spilt through it. They were definite Jarheads and officers too. Although, what made Tony curious was the fact they were wearing black BDU’s. The group was fascinating to observe. At the centre of the group, was the commander but he was wearing Air-Force wings. Now that was curious. He had to be the commander as there was no one else who could get away with that haircut.

The group toasted him, “To the Colonel, the only guy who can come back from a Hail Mary.”

The man blushed and managed to extricate himself from the group. He’d ordered a few rounds so they were okay. He'd spotted someone at the bar he thought he knew.
“So of all the Gin joints, I find you here?” John said, glad for the chance to catch up with an old friend.

Tony whirled around at the butchered movie quote to see an old friend. “John?”

“Hey, Tony,” John looked just as good as the last time he’d seen him. John wasn't done, asking, "How are you doing?"

Tony spluttered because he found himself speaking the truth. “Now, there is a loaded question, you sure you want the answer?”

John sat on the stool next to him. “So tell me. I got nothing but time.”

Tony had a wry smile, “I have tonight. Then I am out on the Seahawk.”

John frowned, “You told me you were sticking it to your old man. You wanted to be a cop.”

They had been close friends growing up. The strained relationships with their fathers a common ground. They might have been more at one time. Still, John wanted the skies and Tony had wanted sports. At the time, you couldn't be that and in a gay relationship. As a result, they had kept their friendship platonic never exploring their true chemistry. John had been the one to kick his ass when he realised sports was over. They’d lost touch when John had gone to Afghanistan.

Tony sighed, “I was, I am. Right now, I am working as a Federal Agent, NCIS.”

Sheppard nodded as he didn’t need any further explanation. After all, he commanded Marines. “Well, at least we have tonight.”

Tony could work with the short term. They caught up on all the things they’d missed in each other’s life. It was crazy all the things they could share. John had paled when he’d heard about the plague. Tony had paled hearing about the edited version of his recent field promotion.

John looked at the drink in his friend’s hand. He could see a dangerous path his friend was starting to slide down. “You don’t need that you know.”

Tony sighed, “Well it's drink or sex, and I was trying to turn over a new leaf.”

“Why?” John smirked at him and all the blood rushed south in Tony’s body. “We could finally do something about us.”

There it was. Jesus, John had never been shy about getting what he wanted in life. Tony had taken a leaf out of his book in going to be a cop. He couldn’t believe that they were getting a second chance.

John needed Atlantis but he deserved some happiness of his own. All his team had found someone else. The job was his life and he would admit that but he wasn’t naive. He couldn’t do it forever as much as he wanted.

Tony looked at his old friend, and John looked good even in BDU’s. “Anyone ever tell you that you look like your walking sin on legs.”

John snickered, “I could do so much more. Come on Tony, take a chance. You are out of place here.”
It was just a hand but at the same time, it was so much more.

~*~

Tony walked onto the ship with his head held high, and a delicious ache in his ass that he would savour. He spoke with the commander and got himself squared away. He went and found the Master-chief, the one in charge of PT. John had told him that a long ass run could shake off the worst stresses.

He was right. Seeing John, and reinvigorating their old thing had been brilliant timing. It had helped Tony remember when his Dad had shipped him off. He’d survived it as a kid and he could reinvent himself again.

The possibilities were endless. He wasn’t too friendly with the crew. The enlisted felt like he was there to spy on him. He was bored, he could admit it. The Commander of the boat, Captain Owens, was a damn good one. It meant there was little ill-discipline as they feared what he would do.

It led to an easy assignment. It might have hurt that no one in Washington had tried to contact him. He got the message, yet again, his family was shutting him out.

He did get a daily phone call from John. It was a life-line to stop him from going crazy. John never explained how he always managed to get a phone call, though to the ship even at sea. He left it with a mysterious, “The old girl likes me happy.”

Tony didn’t question it. He just focused on the part where John had said Tony made him happy. “Well, the feeling is mutual.”

~*~

Tony was in his makeshift office. “Captain, what can I do for you?”

“You have training in terrorism-related cases?” The question was random but Tony answered him.

“Yeah, I am a trained investigator. You need an answer, I follow the clues.” It was as good as explanation as any. Tony hadn’t realised just how well investigative skills transferred.

The Captain had his answer in six hours. He couldn’t believe it. He put a call into his friend, Phillip Davenport. He didn’t get why DiNozzo was with him, not that he was complaining. It was just the Agent’ talents would go to waste on his boat.

~*~

“Hello, Captain Owens.”

Owens sighed, “Can you tell me why Agent Anthony DiNozzo got booted off the MCRT. I’m telling you he is wasted out here. Although you should thank him. He was the one to help you with your ... homeworld problem.”

Davenport had made the mistake of putting the call on speaker. He was in a meeting with Maj-General Jack O’Neill. The smile on his friend’s face was not good. He found himself saying, “Now Jack, you can’t steal my Agent.”

Jack snorted, “Your friend said it to you. Your agent is wasted out there and I just so happen to have
a big ship that could do with an investigator. He would fit in well on Atlantis.”

Davenport was going to chew Vance out. He told him to find the mole, not kill his best team. When you had a closure rate the likes of the MCRT, you don’t mess with it. He had to find some way to battle O’Neill, which would mean he needed to keep his wits.

Phillip was smug. “You won’t do it. DiNozzo is loyal to Gibbs. He has stuck it out far longer than any other Agent.”

Jack smirked, “If he could keep up with ole Gunny I want him more.”

Davenport wanted to bash his head against his desk, “He never stayed in a job more than two years before NCIS.”

Jack smirked because he had Phillip at a disadvantage, “In the first case, it was not safe to stay in the city. In the second case, his partner was dirty and betrayed everything DiNozzo believed in.”

Phillip frowned, realising now that he was missing something. “What am I missing?”

Jack shrugged, “Let me put it this way. I have a trump card that will assure his transfer.”

Davenport figured he was bluffing. “Oh, what is that?”

Jack stood up, “His boyfriend. I will order him to fly to the Seahawk. You know him, he is the CO on Atlantis.”

Davenport was glad he was sitting down. He would have fallen back in shock. Tony DiNozzo and Colonel Sheppard. Jack snickered, knowing why he was shocked. He may have been too but John had approached him to do the appropriate background check. It was critical, considering how important John was to the Stargate programme.

~*~

Tony had been told to report to the flight deck for a surprise. Owen’s smile as he said it, freaked Tony out. Still, Tony did as ordered. The chopper pilot was good. The chopper set down with not even a bump in high wind.

Tony’s smile was blinding because he knew who was flying the helicopter. It could only be John. He ran over and hugged John. John wasn’t as circumspect for once, kissing him. It had been a long two months with just phone calls to satisfy them.

The crowd cat-called and John just bowed. He’d been hanging around with too many Marines to be affected by their humour.

Tony was still buzzing as he asked John, “What are you doing?”

John hadn’t let go of his hand. “Well, I want to show you a cool place that I think we’ll both like. Best of all, General O’Neill wants to offer you a job too,”

“What’s the catch?”

John laughed, “Well, there are crazy scientists, crazier Marines. Crisis, well they are part of daily life but there will be one good thing I can promise if you Agent Afloat for my base.”
“Oh yeah.” Tony asked, guessing he already knew the answer.

John smirked but it was smug as he knew he’d win this fight. “Me. I just need you to sign a ton of forms to show you my base.”

~*~

Meanwhile, in Washington, Vance was getting his ass chewed out.

“What were you thinking fucking with the MCRT?” The security demanded to know.

Vance had a job to do. “You gave me the mandate to find the mole and bring the agency into the twenty-first century.”

Davenport pinched his nose, “Well, you just lost the team with the best closure rate. So you won’t have that kudos to trade on.”

Vance wasn’t following. “Agent Gibbs is still with us, Sir.”

Davenport had to laugh at that naivety. He liked Gibbs, he did. It was just the sun did not shine out of his backside like he had many believing in Washington. ‘The closure rate. It has consistently remained the highest of all the agencies in the last eight years.”

“I’m aware.”

Davenport was huffing down the phone. He was not amused that much Leon could tell. “Yes, so tell me. Who is the one Agent who has been on the team for that entire time?”

Vance racked his brain because he knew Gibbs hadn’t. Christ, it was DiNozzo. It couldn’t be. “Sir, if you are unhappy, I will recall DiNozzo.”

Vance winced at that hollow chuckle. It was not a good sound to hear from your boss. “Too late, you will be getting the paperwork from Homeworld Security. SAC DiNozzo is transferring to their agency on orders of the President.”

Vance put the phone down. Davenport had called DiNozzo SAC so there was a promotion in the transfer too. He would have thought it was a joke accept this was Presidential Order. He’d missed something and he hated getting things wrong.

“Cynthia, Pull the whole of Agent DiNozzo’s file. Do not let anyone disturb me unless it is an emergency.”

~*~

Tony’s life was one giant sci-fi routine once he signed the forms. It was okay. He was beloved on the base as he had brought with him his movie collection on hard drives. Oh, and the other small fact that he made the base commander happy.

He snuggled closer to John. He didn’t care. The lights were down for the movie but none of John’s soldiers cared about his orientation. He’d go through hell for them and that was all that mattered in their eyes.

“You okay?” John asked.
Tony nodded, “I’m happy. We’ve finally found our place.”

Sheppard smiled and Tony saw the light flicker brighter for a second. Atlantis loved his boyfriend as much as he did.

“Yeah, it’s quite the place,” was all John said.

It didn’t matter. The one thing they’d both wanted to do since they were kids was to fit in somewhere and find their place. He couldn’t believe it had taken going to the ass end of the galaxy but it worked for them.

________________________________________________________________

However feel free to check out my facebook page to find out about fic updates, see sneak peeks at works in progress and ask any questions that you might have!
Chapter Summary

The guy accidently touched his ass in catching him. Mike blushed as it had been a while. He quipped, “You sir, are no gentleman.”

The smile he got in return was blinding, “And you, you, are no lady.”

Chapter Notes

There are quotes from the movie Gone with the Wind. As usual, I do not own. I hope you enjoy this pairing as it was a challenge. This ending is open for ... well, spoilers.

For those unaware of the show, In Suits, Mike Ross is a genius who is masquerading as a Lawyer ... for reasons.

Oh, and it was Red_Pink_Dots who wanted Mike. I hope you enjoy :D

1. Movie Matinee (Mike Ross) - Red_Pink_Dots

Mike thought life was pretty good. Okay, so there was the lying every day. Still, he had respect, money, and a job. He had a mentor in Harvey and one that wouldn’t see him in a jail. He knew that was where his friendship with Trevor was heading towards. He just wasn’t strong enough to ditch him.

Still, there was one side to this new job he hadn’t considered. The lying and the mask he wore every day. It was wearing. The only one who knew the truth was Harvey. He was the only one who could know what was going on.

He had done such good work on turning a pro-bono into a class action suit. He’d been rewarded with a day off. Mike was savouring it as he knew they were unheard of for associates. He would deal with the jealousy later on.

He did the only thing he could. He found the matinee theatre special. Perfect, he could get lost in
the tumultuous love life of Clark Gable. It would stop him thinking about his own messy life.

*Gone with the Wind* was just too good a movie to ignore. He got his popcorn and found a seat. The place was empty, which was a shame. You just had to be able to appreciate the classics.

Mike let himself be absorbed in the movie and if he mouthed along to Rhett Butler’s lines. Well, that was between him and Clark.

He saw the other guy sit down. His suit was expensive but he didn’t carry himself like a lawyer. Mike might have thought model with those looks but that wasn’t even true. He had callous on his right hand and Mike froze seeing the peek of a gun. It was in a holster so he was some type of Agent.

Mike focussed on the movie. He could ill-afford to attract the attention of law-enforcement. Tragedy as the guy was hot but Mike hadn't forgotten he was pretending he was a lawyer.

He should have known he wouldn’t have a chance. It was all so innocent. It was not his fault, he was clumsy. He’d stepped up to head to the bathroom. He got all the way to maybe-Agent and tripped. It was a graceful fall, in that he was caught before he could land on his ass.

The guy accidently touched his ass in catching him. Mike blushed as it had been a while. He quipped, “You sir, are no gentleman.”

The smile he got in return was blinding, “And you, you, are no lady.”

Mike sucked in a breath as damn, the guy was gorgeous. He was pushing all his buttons. Competent, pretty and could handle himself. He resolved himself to stay strong. He couldn’t get to know the guy. There lay a bad path, a path where Harvey would kill him.

He could be strong. So, when Tony asked him if he wanted to go for drinks. His response was, “Sounds like a fun time.”
Mike could handle his liquor. What he had yet to learn was handle the good stuff. Tony was buying top-shelf bourbon. He drank it because it was good stuff and he was being polite.

He and Tony spoke about many things. He realised that he wasn’t the only one with a mask.

“So which agency do you work for?” Mike asked, curiosity burning. He wanted to know more but he wasn’t stupid. If Tony was a Feeb, he would be making a quick exit feigning a work emergency.

Tony pouted, “I’m Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo. NCIS.”

Mike grinned, “You’re a Navy Cop in a Zenga suit.”

Tony snorted, “Why can’t I be both?”

“Salary caps.”

Tony openly laughed. “You may have a point. Uncle Clive in England was a dear rich soul when he passed.”

Mike shrugged but he could see a shocked look on his new friend’s face. He tried to think why he might be surprised. Mike figured it out, “You’ve never told anyone that have you.”

Tony snorted because, whilst Mike was on the money. He had no inclination to talk about the messy tangled state of his relationship with those at NCIS. He just wanted to have an evening with no masks it was appealing. He knew how to say it, with a movie quote from the movie they’d watched.

“I’m very drunk and I intend on getting still drunker before this evening’s over.”
Mike smirked, “Good goal. I can drink to that.”

Tony smiled, “Good, so tell me about work. Why is it dragging you down?”

Mike sighed, and explained. He was glad it was now and not when he was too drunk. He talked about the issue skirting around it.

Tony sat up, “I can help. I know a thing or two about playing a role.”

Mike did listen. Thanks to his memory, he would remember this even if he ended up black-out drunk. It was good advice and he may just survive at the law firm.

Drinks kept coming, and they slipped ever closer. They were hot and looking for an escape. Why not in each other?

Tony took the initiative and borrowed his lines from the great man himself. It seemed right considering the movie had brought them together. He was bold enough to touch those cheekbones. Mike’s eyes fluttered shut.

Tony found he didn’t like being unable to see those expressive eyes, “Open your eyes and look at me. No, I don’t think I will kiss you. Although you need kissing badly. That’s what’s wrong with you. You should be kissed and often and by someone who knows how.”

Mike snorted, “And I suppose you think you are the right person.”

It may have been Scarlet’s line but there was no other way to respond to such a line.

Tony took the opening, “I might be... If the right moment ever came.”

Mike took the lead, not letting Tony make all the moves. “Well, I say the right time is now.”

And he did something. He kissed Tony and damn, Tony was as good as he promised. He was revved up and ready to go from a kiss. He took Tony’s hand to his, “My place, or yours?”
“My hotel room is two blocks away.”

Mike smirked, “You win.”

And the fact was Tony’s room was probably bigger than his whole apartment. And he was right. Still, more room to have fun in. Damn, Tony was the right guy. He did things to Mike that he thought were a myth.

Mike let go and fell back in a sated pile of contentment. He could feel Tony use a rag to clean them off and he too slipped under the covers and fell asleep.

In many ways, this sucked. Mike wished he’d had the strength to walk away before he spoke to Tony. Now, he’d met a great guy. He could never be with Tony whilst he worked as a lawyer. He was doing good, he was making something of his life. In all his musings, he never realised he was alone. The room was empty, except for a note.

Mike,

*It is not my misfortune that I got the chance to love you.*

If Tony had been there, he would have given him crap for butchering a movie quote. It was sacrilegious. Mike kept reading,

*I will remember my day in New York with fondness.*

*Masks are good, but find someone who knows all of you.*

*You helped me remember that,*

*Love Tony*
Can you play? (Lucifer Morningstar)

Chapter Summary

Tony just bet it did. The guy looked like the best sex on legs. He had no clue just how true that statement was because he was talking to the Devil himself. Lucifer worked hard to keep up his image.

Chapter Notes

For Merrygal, and this pair is just too delicious not to write :D

Tony was done playing nice. He hated it. The team was annoying the hell out of him. He didn’t care if they hated him, or loved him. It was the whiplash between the two moods that was killing him.

He was so glad he was in LA. Hetty Lange had asked for a canny UC operator, and Vance was only too happy to ask Tony. Tony for once, did not kick a gift horse in the mouth and got on a plane.

He had five messages on his phone of the same variation, how could he leave? Why was he not being the faithful St Bernard?

Tony was getting sick of it. He was a competent Agent and was good at what he did. He was feeling stifled in Washington. It was so bad he was thinking of asking Letty if she had an opening.

The bar, Lux, was the place to go if you were looking to lose yourself. Tony couldn’t deny that the idea had merit. He stepped through the doors and loved it. The atmosphere embodied want, take, have. It was a philosophy he could get behind.

The piano was a thing of beauty. Tony found himself wanting to run his hands along it.

“Do it,” a male voice to the side said.
Tony whirled around, “Not mine. It would be like cheating.”

That earned Tony an amused grin. The guy was gorgeous and confident. Tony couldn’t decide what he wanted to get his hands on more - the guy, or the piano.

The guy smirked, “It is my bar and my Piano. I say play it ... if you can.”

Tony pouted, “You wanna play it like that, huh?”

He sat down at the piano. It was a stunning piece, well-crafted and he would guess well-cared for. Tony asked him, “Any requests?”

“Sinner man, Nina Simone. It speaks to me.”

Tony just bet it did. The guy looked like the best sex on legs. He had no clue just how true that statement was. For he was talking to the Devil himself. He worked hard to keep up his image.

Tony had to read people for a living. It could be the difference between life and death for him. He returned sinner man’s smirk as he didn’t have a name. “I’ll play it if you sing it.”

The devil put his drink down, “You’re on.”

The song was something. The few who in the bar got to admire the skill of both the piano player and the singer. They were also pretty to look at which helped.

The song finished and Tony was sad it was over. He’d had fun playing. It was a sad realisation that he couldn’t remember the last time he’d had had true fun. Damn if it was that long, it was too sad to think about.

“And what is the name of my new piano player?” Lucifer asked.
Tony laughed because wow, there was confident, and then there was this guy. “I think the Federal Government may object to you stealing me.”


Tony snickered, “Oh, really. The Devil. Well, you haven’t tempted me yet?”

Lucifer looked at him with fascination. Tony was guessing that everything came easily to this guy; money, girls, power. Lucifer was used to getting what he wanted. Tony felt he should feel a chase or too. It would be good for him.

“You’re not enticed?”

Tony leaned in closer, he knew how to play the tease, “Well, attracted, yes. Enticed, not yet.”

Tony twirled around on the piano chair and went to the bar for a drink. The bartender, was even prettier, what was it with this place?

She poured his drink, and added, “No charge, anyone that can rattle Lucifer gets you a drink on the house.”

“It doesn’t happen too often, I’m guessing,” Tony observed.

Maize smirked, “No, not often. It will be good for him.”

Tony sucked in a breath because despite what she thought. Tony was a sure thing. He just wanted Lucifer to work for it a little. The man in question slid onto the stool next to him.

Lucifer pouted, “So why won’t you come to bed with me?”

Tony’s lip curled up in a half smirk, “Well, you haven’t asked me. A boy likes to feel special, you know.”
Lucifer snorted but knew how to continue. He lent over his new friend, “Oh darling, I will make you feel so special you will forget your name.”

Tony sighed, “I have to fly back to Quantico in the morning.”

Lucifer shrugged, “Oh, I will only need a night. Then you will come back for more.”

****

It was the damnedest thing, Lucifer was right. Even funnier, depending on who you asked - it wasn’t a one night stand. They did the cliched long distance thing.

Tony knew McSnoopalot had tried to hack his files to figure out where he was going. It didn’t work and he had to replace his gear himself. McGee could have asked requisitions for a new computer. It would mean explaining, how the virus was downloaded in the first place. He didn’t know how but Tony knew Lucifer was responsible.

He would think of a reward worthy of such a gift. How do you reward the Devil? Tony knew just what he to do. He stopped off at the shop to buy whipped cream, honey dust, and the odd strawberry. After all, decadence wasn’t just his boyfriend’s remit.

No, he knew what he could do. Sign the transfer request Letty had landed in his email this morning. He would still get the items, as they would want to celebrate in style.

__________________________

Anyone interested should check out Tom Ellis singing Sinner man on youtube, he's in character. :D

Also, my teaching term has started so updates will likely slow down. Sorry
Chapter Summary

Jack raised an eyebrow at how forward Tony was. He wasn’t wrong. “You are not shy?”

Tony teased, “Do you want me to be? I can do role play but I think that is a fifth date type of thing.”

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Merrygal, RainyDayReader and Brent1 who all requested Jack O’Neill

Not a Douche

Tony hated award ceremonies. He didn’t want an award for doing his job. Gibbs was doing this to torture him, he was sure. It was not like he went to any of his own award ceremonies. The box of Gibb's medals in Tony's desk proved it.

No. Tony did not have that luck. He had to go. It was on the order of Director Vance. He was sure it was because Vance figured it would be torture for him. He would be right as well. Still, Tony couldn’t bring himself to admit it to the guy. So for his pride, he was suffering a penguin suit and what seemed like all the douches in Washington.

There was one thing that was saving this evening from being a total disaster. The free bar. Tony was going to live it as large as his liver would allow. He wasn’t stupid enough to get drunk but he wasn’t going to stop until he could go with the flow.

At the bar, there was a guy. A textbook, a picture-perfect definition of a silver-fox. He owned his image in a way Gibbs never quite could. Tony was in deep lust without him opening his mouth.
just hoped the guy was not a douche like the rest.

He wasn’t holding out hope.

“So what is a nice air-force guy doing at a Navy shindig?” Tony asked out of sheer curiosity.

The man turned around and wow, Tony was in the company of a Major-General. The guy smirked but did answer,

“The Marines under my command are a special type of crazy but they deserve to be rewarded.”

Tony held his hand out, "Agent Anthony DiNozzo, call me Tony."

Jack took it and let their hands linger, "Major General Jack O’Neill. So what did you do to suffer this stupendous boredom fest?"

Tony’s respect went up a notch. He was well aware, how the Marines reacted to other branches. So if they respected a chair force commander, then there was more to the guy than meets the eye. And just from the eye, he looked pretty good. “I dived into a river to drag my drowning boss out. It seemed like a good idea at the time.”

“Why? Do you hate your boss now, or something?”

Tony snorted, “Well, that is the Jethro Gibbs effect. So more than a few have harboured murderous thoughts against him.”

Jack whistled, he knew Jethro. They had run some op together back in the day. “So is Jethro still scaring everyone away?”

Tony shrugged, “I have lasted seven years. I think it is a record.”
Jack raised his glass because that was quite a feat. “Gods, I hate this monkey suit.”

Tony was glad there was someone else here who hated the pomp and circumstance. “Should a Major General be saying that?”

Jack looked smug, “It is because I am a Major General that I can.”

He said it deadpan. The humour he was showing would be intriguing amongst the joint chiefs. Tony knew all the names of the mover and shakers in the military complex - He had to if he wanted to be good at his job.

“Fair enough, let’s drink to that,” Tony said without missing a beat.

O’Neill snorted, “It’s free booze.”

“And it tastes all the better for it,” Tony replied. There had to be some compensation for the ceremony.

The General was bored if Tony was a good judge of character. Tony would be right as he asked, “So ... why was it not a good idea?”

Tony could play dumb but he knew what Jack was asking him. “A small bout I had with Y-Pestis.”

Jack knew what that was. His team had had a run in with a society on MX-765B who lived with it hanging over them. “Bubonic or Pneumonic plague?”

Tony was impressed and couldn’t hide it. “Pneumonic.”

Jack shuddered with empathy. “Well, then here is to been a stubborn bastard.”
Tony chuckled clinking his glass. “My boss ordered me not to die. You can’t defy an order from a Marine.”

Jack liked this guy more and more. DADT was a thing of the past but still ... He had saved the planet. It should earn him a little leeway about his conquests. It had in the past. “Do you want to get out of here? Find a bar, watch some football?”

Tony sucked in a breath. “Sure. I am so glad you not a douche.”

Jack had to laugh, “There are plenty who would say differently.”

Tony shook his head. “Not me. You get the food, I will buy the drink. Date Heaven right there.”

Jack raised an eyebrow at how forward Tony was. He wasn’t wrong. “You are not shy?”

Tony teased, “Do you want me to be? I can do role play but I think that is a fifth date type of thing.”

Jack finished his whiskey, “Nah, fourth date. Kinks are a fifth date conversation.”

Tony sucked in a breath because damn, this guy wasn’t shy at all either. He was playing to win and Tony for once was wondering what a fifth date would look like. He wanted to find his footing. “I thought all you soldiers are repressed?”

Jack grinned as he slung his jacket over his shoulders. “You will find there is nothing repressed about me.”

Tony couldn’t wait to find out a hell of a lot more than that.
Not a little bit repressed (Steve McGarrett 2)

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Linda123, bobdog54, Felmyst

There is discussion around sexual assault, nothing happens in the chapter but if it is a trigger please be warned.

**Not even a Little repressed.**

Steve was of the opinion that the repeal of DADT was a long time coming. He never cared who shared a SEAL’s bed. He just cared whether they were competent enough to do their job. It was a good thing. His men could love who they wanted without fear of the jobs. There was only one downside to the whole policy. He wouldn’t care to mention the amount of calls he’d taken having to deal with fights. The fights always centred around civilian men trying to pick up one of his men.

So while policy repeal was a great thing. It left some members of the public with a distorted notion. It was stupid to believe that all serving members were repressed and didn’t mind being picked up.

So the last few weeks every day like clockwork the same thing would happen. Training would finish for the day. He would go and relax having taught the fresh green SEAL’s a few new tricks and then he would relax. Well, that was the plan. He would go to his quarters but he would not get a chance to relax. He would be called to a local bar to settle a complaint involving his men and the civilians. He would have been crankier but he was well aware, it was not all his trainees' fault. Of course, he still made them do suicide runs until they puked at 5 am the next morning. Trainers prerogative.

He walked into O’Malley’s to see to of his men hog-tied, and two civilian men hog tied. There was a man looming over them with a pissed off expression and a gun hanging at his side, calm and to the point. He was not overly threatening but just making the point that if they pissed him off - he may shoot them. Steve could respect it as a form of situation defusing.

Steve used his initiative and asked the agent. It wasn't a superior detective skill, the gold badge gave it away. “What happened Agent?”
“Well, I was enjoying my drink when an altercation broke out.” The Agents tone suggested it was the interruption that was his biggest issue.

Steve sighed because he could guess where this was going. “So which one was thought to be gay?”

“Me sir.”

Steve had to laugh, “So they picked the straightest guy of the group?”

All three nodded looking as meek as possible. The Agent was smirking. Steve may be in more trouble than the idiots in cuffs. The Agent looked to have a sense of humour. It would be bad for Steve if he did. The guy was gorgeous, if he had a sense of humour too then he would be in trouble.

Steve pinched his nose. “And you couldn't say no?”

The Agent snickered, “Smith who is goon 2.” He helpfully pointed at who he had christened goon 2. “… Said, he would smack Peters around if he didn’t go into the Alley.”

Steve wanted to growl because Peters was not a SEAL, he was a valued technician but an eight of the size. So may have felt intimidated by the size of the guy. Steve wasn't naive, sexual assault could happen to anyone at any time. It sucked, no, it more than sucked but it was a fact of life. So Steve asked, “Walker and Smith, how did you defend your crewmate?”

Agent, who Steve still did not know the name of said, “Well, they did defend him. Walker and Smith decided to smash goon 1, and goon 2, into the bar. I was sad as my pint broke but so did their noses.”

Steve looked at the two goons. “You know not all service men are repressed.”

The Agent snickered in delight. “I don’t know there a few brass in Washington I know who would
Steve wanted to laugh at that comment. He did. He couldn’t as they might be douches but they were his commanding officers. He looked at his young trainees. “Look, my biggest problem is that you let the situation get to the point where you felt the need for a fight.”

His men were wise enough not to say a word. Still, he wanted to make a point. "You know good looking guys and women get hit on all the time. As long as you are respectful you don't end up with broken noses."

Goon 1 hissed, "Yeah, how?"

Steve looked at the Agent, he managed to convey, are you game? He got a nod in return. "So let's role play..."

Tony slid in close to Steve, he could feel the guy's breath on his cheek. Tony spoke, "So you are way too cute to be drinking alone."

Steve smiled and he didn't miss the hitch in the Agent's voice. "I'm Lt Commander Steve McGarrett."

Tony smirked, "Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo, NCIS."

Steve had to laugh at the way his men paled. They just understood they were in a precarious position. Still, he was pretty sure he could get them out and maybe a date in the process. Guess, tonight wouldn't be a total loss. "So can I buy you a drink, Tony?"

Tony smirked, "Sure thing handsome let's just wait until we lose the audience."
They turned back to their audience. "See, dead easy. A small amount of charm and things are easy." Then Steve lost his calm edge, "Well, as long as you remember no means no."

Tony spoke up, "I already explained how I would shoot their dicks off if they ever forgot the word no means."

Steve could adore this guy. "I like it, I will help you on your hunt."

"Thanks, my boss is a marine. So if I lose my gun ... I will always have a knife."

"You can't do that... I will report you," Goon 2 insisted.

Tony smirked, "Their boss is a respected SEAL and I am on the MCRT so my word won't be in doubt."

It sunk in. The Sheriff got there and dragged them away to their county jail. Steve wasn't going to lose the initiative. He called his second to get a pool car to drag back his men. Tom was standing in the doorway.

"Sir?"

Steve knew Tom was calling him by his rank due to the mixed company. He answered, "These men need to cool their heels before I sort the issue out in the morning."

"Very good sir."

And then there was just Tony and Steve. He could get used to this. Tony still looked relaxed but had holstered his gun. There was a teasing glint in Tony's eye.

"So I thought not all Navy men are repressed guys?"
Steve laughed and it felt good. He loved his job but it could be bleak. "I am not even a little bit repressed."

"We'll see," was all Tony said.

***

Steve whistled on his way to PT that morning. The men frowned but didn't want to question their commander's good mood. Tony had to admit this morning that he wasn't even a little bit repressed.

Steve didn't do anything by half-measures. He had secured Tony's phone number and a second date over breakfast.

Life was good.
Who knows you best?

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Ghost1 and to others who floated Kelly Severide - Chicago Fire. For those unaware, Taylor Kinney plays a firefighter on the show.

BE WARNED: Spoilers for characters on Chicago Fire S1 and beyond.

Tony always had a side to himself he never showed. Well, to all except one person. It was kind of fitting as that person never showed the world about himself too.

Kelly Severide, like Tony, was a gorgeous man. He used women and alcohol as a shield to not let the world get too close. It worked too. People could never understand the friendship between Kelly and, Shay, the Ambo driver. Shay was a stunning woman who was his roommate. The perfect part was the fact she was a lesbian so no tension.

And now sweet, caring, perfect Shay, was dead. Kelly was a mess and he didn’t know what to do. Right now, he needed Tony. He was smart enough to know it. This time, he was talking the right option and asking for help.

“Hey, good looking,” came the easy response over the phone.

Kelly smiled despite himself. “Hey, Stallion.” He knew Tony would know something was up. He looked out over Chicago and admitted, "I need you.”

Tony didn’t even blink. He just said, “I’ll put in for leave.”
The phone call ended but already Kelly started to feel lighter. He didn't have to be the tough firefighter with Tony.

****

In Washington, there was only one person who knew the truth about Tony. Gibbs was rock solid and the only one Tony had told about Kelly. It was the deal he and Kelly had. They both had rough dangerous professions. They didn't want to stop working as a firefighter and a cop. They just had to tell one person who would let the other know should the worse happen.

Tony looked up, “Boss, I need a week.”

Ziva and Tim snorted, “What? Why?” Were the questions from both of the other member of the teams. Tony couldn’t care less. He was not interested in either of them in this moment. They could be nosy and figure it out on their own.

Gibbs ignored them too because unlike his team. He’d picked up the urgency in his SFA’s voice. “Why?”

“It’s Kelly, something has happened.”

Tony had never been so grateful for the gender-ambiguous name. Gibb’s face shuttered for a second and Tony was sorry for the reminder about his daughter.

Gibbs was as good as his word, as all, he said in return was, “Go.”

He could hear the jealous questions, “Who is Kelly? A secret wife?”

Tony would have snickered because Kelly Severide was as about as far removed from a wife as possible. He wouldn’t like the man if he was. They had met the night Tony had pulled the two kids
out the fire. It had been such a defining night in his life. It was the day he decided to be a cop, the
day he fell in love.

It was a crazy day. He’d met someone he fit so in sync with but their lives wouldn’t have worked.
They met at a time, where they couldn’t be safe in their jobs and be out and proud. They did love each other but snatched time where they could.

They had tried other relationships but the sad fact was their hearts weren’t in it. They already knew who they should be with. Tony was getting to the point in his life ... Where he was thinking about taking the big leap. He would make the big gesture soon but not now. He would wait until he helped Kelly deal with the fallout of Shay’s death.

***

Chicago was a fine city. Tony had been here enough to know his way around. He had no idea exactly where Kelly would be so he started from the most logical place - Firehouse 51. Tony just hoped Chief Boden was in the building. He wouldn't have to answer any awkward questions if he was.

The Firehouse was like it had been the last time. Tony stuck out in his jeans and Armani shirt but he didn't care. He walked in with his usual confidence. He was smart enough to clip his shield to his jeans. It helped to smooth the way. It helped with things like airport security. There was no way he would go anywhere unless he was armed.

“Can I help you?” One of the firefighters asked Tony. Tony knew Kelly and Matt and that was about it.

Tony looked at the guy, “Is the Chief in?”

He got a vague direction into a place that looked like an office. Tony offered a polite, “Thanks.”

Tony knocked on the door, “Hey, chief.”

“DiNozzo? Is that you?”
Tony chuckled embracing the guy, “Yeah, it’s me. Kelly called so I’m here.”

Truer words and all that. The Chief was relieved to hear he wasn’t going super self-destructive. He needed his Rescue lieutenant in working order. “Damn, at least he is learning.”

Tony was smart enough to know what he was referring to and wisely said nothing. There was nothing he could say. He just wanted to go and see Kelly.

The chief sighed, “He is at Molly's. Look after him.”

Tony smiled, “Always will.”

Tony walked out of the chief's office and spotted, Casey. The blonde guy was walking around with a bad case of shell shock. The death of a teammate tended to have that effect. Tony's heart went out to all the crew. “Hey Matt, come join us for a drink.”

The blonde looked up in shock at the voice. He knew the voice belonged to Tony. He just didn’t expect to see him here. “Hey, man, how are you doing?”

The others were watching with open curiosity. The guy was known to the chief and the lieutenant. Odds were high he knew Severide too.

Tony smirked, “Good. I beat the plague. That’s new.”

“I heard about that. You freaked Kelly out with that you know.”

Tony shrugged, knowing that the eavesdroppers would pick up on the plague and not why he was here. “He freaks me out too. I never tried to catch a bomb.”

Matt chuckled, thinking how well Tony and Kelly were for each other. “Yeah, but I heard the story
of you diving out of a plane without a working parachute.”

Tony shrugged, “Hazards of working with Gibbs.”

Casey snorted, “I never said he had any room to bitch.”

They walked out of the fire-station ignoring any looks.

****

The bar was heaving as you would expect. Tony slipped through the crowd with the ease of a socialite. Matt had never watched a non-native manage it so easy.

Kelly felt the tap on his shoulder. He didn’t hyper-react as he recognised Tony’s scent. “What took you so long?”

Tony pointed to Matt, “I saw him moping around the station. He looked too pathetic not to get a drink into him.”

Kelly smirked as Matt pouted because of Tony's comment. He found a weak smile as he agreed with his friend. “You're right. It is our civic duty.”

Matt was smart enough to see where this was going. "I am going to call Gabby for a pickup."

Tony watched Matt slide into the booth and then set off to the bar to get the drinks. Tony knew how important it was to rip the band-aid off a problem. You needed to let the grief roll over you. Embrace it, and then move on. In their business, you would go mad, or get dead if you didn't.

He slid the good whiskey over and slammed the bottle on the table. “To Shay.”

“To Shay.”
Now Matt understood what was going on. Kelly Severide, taciturn, no desire to speak ever had reached out to the one person he could. He never understood the relationship between the two. If it would help then he welcomed Tony's presence.

The evening progressed with them sharing war stories. It was cathartic if nothing else.

Nearing midnight, Gabby found them, “Come on Matt, time to go home.”

“I am soooo glad you are here.”

She rolled her eyes, “You know he can’t handle good whiskey.”

Tony snickered, “Sorry, you can’t blame Kel’ it is my fault.”

She couldn’t be mad. The man had a stellar pout, a puppy would be proud of that pout. It was the type where you couldn’t stay mad at him. “You are a little too pretty to stay mad at.”

Tony smirked because he could make a comment about her fiancé but he would behave. Kelly was the one to surprise Tony by grabbing his hand. “You have your own pretty boy.”

Her eyes widened catching the implication. There was a flush on her cheeks at just the thought of the picture. What a picture, Kelly Severide and his ‘pretty boy’ made an attractive picture.

“Do you need a ride?” She asked.

Tony waved it off, “We’re good, thank you. I booked into the Hilton. I will drag him back there.”

Kelly liked the image. He was glad he now had Tony to himself. He didn’t know why he was feeling brave. He was never ashamed of Tony. He just didn’t want to have to deal with homophobia on the job. You had to trust the guys had your back, lest you end up dead in a fire. “You’re mine.”
Tony clutched his knee, knowing Kelly would probably feel different in the morning. “Always. Sleep it off Kel’ you will feel different in the morning.”

Kelly shook his head. He knew this was a reaction to Shay’s death. It was at times like this, where you saw life clearly. “No, I won’t ... Not if you are there.”

Tony didn’t want to hope. He was hearing everything he wanted. He could rearrange work to move here. The FBI had a standing offer to lead the office of his choice.

****

As promised, Tony was there in the morning. He woke up to the feeling of someone stroking his side. He moved into the feeling, loving the sensation. “Hmm, morning.”

He accepted the kiss, closing his eyes and revelling in the feeling. He never understood the cliche of being at peace with a loved one. He did with Kelly.

“How do you like Chicago?”

Tony opened his eyes to see the intense look in his partner’s eyes. Kelly looked so serious he was on immediate alert. “What’s wrong?”

Kelly looked nervous like he wanted to ask something. Tony knew how hard it was for his love to talk. It was true what they say, opposites attract. Tony loved to talk and Kelly preferred actions.

“How do you like Chicago?”

Tony answered honestly, “It has a big plus ... You.”

Kelly was still stroking his side, knowing it was one of his big weaknesses. “Would you ... I mean, would you want to move in with me?”
Tony rolled over, “Are you serious?”

“As I will ever be ... I don’t care what people think. I can fight and you can too. We are not helpless and I have lost too much time to ignore love. We both have.”

Tony sucked in a breath. Kelly never spoke so much but damn, when he did. He went all out, Tony knew it was crazy. He had a job and a career in NCIS but Chicago had Kelly and a fresh start. He hadn’t been happy for a while at NCIS. Was this the sign he had been looking for?

Tony couldn’t wait because he didn’t want Kel to think he was rejected. Tony had suffered that too much in his life. He knew that rejection was harder to come back from than the worst physical injury.

“Yeah, I will. I will make the call to the FBI today.”

The kiss he got as a response let him know the decision was the right one. Christ, he had to tell Gibbs he was leaving. He would pity the poor SFA who had to deal with the entitled duo. He just hoped he was around when McGee found out he didn’t meet the requirements.

Nah, he didn’t care. Kelly rolled over on top of him and distracted him thoroughly.

Life was taking a turn but Tony just knew it was for the better.
Interesting: Good or bad? (Dr House)

Chapter Summary

It is never a good thing when House finds you interesting ... Is it?

Chapter Notes

NB: Canon is loose here, imagine that after Tony saves Maddie and Gibbs. He ended up at Princeton for treatment.

This chapter is for Mefeather.

Oh, and the chapter represents the total number of pairings I have prompts for, it will change as I add more where possible :D

Interesting: Good or bad?

Tony hated hospitals with a passion. They sucked. It is just after you survive the pneumonic plague ... You never want to see another one, ever again. It wasn’t rational but Tony feared he would go into a hospital one day, and never come out alive. In his nightmares, he could still see the blue lights from his treatment.

Which is why he wanted to kill Gibbs all over again for his little stunt. Going to a bust with no backup was stupid. Gibbs would have had his ass if he tried. Tony wouldn't dare to think what would have happened if he had taken a girl with him. Gibbs had done both and almost got himself and the witness killed. Tony hadn't thought, he'd reacted seeing Gibbs land in the water. He’d shot the bad guys and dived in after the boss’. The difficult part was the consequence of his act. River's are cold and his lungs never reacted well to the cold anymore.

“You dived into a river?” The doctor asked in outrage.

Tony looked up and took in the doctor’s appearance. Tony, sized him up in that first moment. He couldn't help it, it was the cop in him. Tony was amused, the guy must be a brilliant maverick. It was
the only way his appearance and behaviour would be tolerated. Tony would know, he’d used it to his own advantage more than once. It was a perfect technique to be underestimated. Tony shrugged, “My boss was stupid enough to reverse his car into it.”

“So you rescued him? Sounds like he should suffer for his stupidity, not you.” The Doctor's incredulous tone made Tony think he didn't agree with his actions. It made him kind of like the doctor more. As he struggled to breathe, he wondered if he would regret his actions.

Tony huffed, “It was the pretty blonde witness I was worried about. I would have looked bad rescuing her and not him.”

Now that got the doctor’s attention. Tony wondered just what it would be like to have his whole attention. Still, Tony was getting ahead of himself. He remembered he was supposed to be a ladies man. Plus, there was the whole struggling to breathe. It put a dampener on any type of extra-curricular activity.

Tony watched as the doc read his notes. He would be able to tell him when he reached the good part. He saw a brief flicker of surprise, and then the sarcasm flowed, “Nice. So did my underlings screw up or is your medical history accurate?”

Tony laughed at the blunt question even as he heard the other doctor hiss in horror. It was a mistake as it caused Tony to have a coughing fit. As much as hated it, he took another deep breath of oxygen from the mask. He was stubborn, not stupid. “Too real. Hence, why I am here getting checked out.”

An underling hissed, “Empathy, House.”

Tony snorted, “Relax, Dr Cameron. I had the plague I got over it ... Mostly.”

It wasn't even close to the truth. What he wasn't going to do was spill his guts to a stranger even if they were a medical professional. His Doctor used sarcasm as his shield to keep out the world, he used jokes and humour.
She frowned at Tony's response. She would have expected something a little less flippant. Still, it was not her life. She was just asked by the Dean to try and limit House’s craziness. It was a job that was with too little pay. “I give up.”

House watched his duckling storm out and he frowned, “You got her to storm out.”

Tony saw the pout on the Doc’s face and had to snort. Snorting was about all his energy levels could take. “She expects you to be an ass. Me, I’m the nice patient.”

House sized up his patient, much like Tony had a few moments ago. The Agent was handsome and he knew it. There was more to him and House found himself wanting to peel back the layers. He hoped the treatment cycle was short. He was a dick but there were some rules even House wouldn’t breach. Bend, maybe but not break. “That is a lie. You hide all things behind your shield.”

Tony could have refuted him. It would have been all too easy. Yet, he was stuck in those blue eyes. So he answered back, “Just like you Doc. I will do something about it when you do.”

House nodded to acknowledge the fair point. He set about the treatment. He liked Tony enough not to let his care be handled by one of his underlings. He was far too cute to leave to Cameron and her ‘feelings’.

A woman burst through the door, in shock. Tony didn’t roll his eyes but it was a near thing. She was looking at House in shock. Tony decided to help the guy out. If it gave him the opportunity to mess with someone after his day. Well, no one could begrudge him. “Is something wrong ma’am?”

“No, no. I just wanted to check-up on an unconfirmed report.” The Dean of Medicine said.

House didn’t bother to play nice. “Well, Mommy, Cameron may have snitched but I am behaving
Tony was glad for the oxygen mask as it gave himself a moment to compose himself. She was wearing her Doctor’s coat so Tony could identify her as the boss lady.

“Dr House has been exemplary in the care he has offered me. I appreciate the lack of fawning or false sensitivity, Dr Cuddy.”

Cuddy wasn’t sure she was hearing this, “That is good to hear. Carry on.”

House waited until she left, “You are my favourite patient ever.”

Tony’s nebuliser treatment was over. His lungs felt a thousand times stronger. He knew he would have to use the set he had at home for lung therapy. “I’m guessing you don’t say that ever.”

“You would be right,” House agreed as it was true.

Tony stood up, feeling bold and brave. There was nothing like adrenaline-fuelled adventures. “You know, I won’t be your patient for much longer.”

House smirked, “You have my number, Agent. If you choose to use it.”

Tony had a shit week. Gibbs seemed pissed at him, which was a nice way to show thanks for saving his ass. Tony didn’t care too much. What was bothering him this week were a pair of piercing blue eyes. It was all he could see when he closed his eyes. It made his usual pick-up routine flat. He didn’t want them and couldn’t pretend.
He was in his apartment flipping House’s card around and around. He stopped overthinking it. There was no point in denying it. He’d wanted to see the Doc again if their connection could be as explosive as it promised. House was good as Tony was in knots over just a conversation.

The call connected with a brusque, “Yes.”

“Dr House?”

Tony waited for a response. He wasn’t disappointed, “Agent Sexy!”

Tony could hear the genuine delight in the phone call, which was good. It meant he wasn’t going to feign something wrong and are it medical. The doctor asked him,

“What can I do for you?”

Tony had to bite back a moan at the images the comment made. There were so many things House could do. Tony decided to chase what he wanted. “I was wondering was there a good restaurant around your place?”

House thought about it and teased, “What are you looking for?”

“Good food, good music, and you.”

Tony was trying a new approach, laying all his cards on the table. He heard the chuckle, as House replied,

“I notice you didn’t ask me to be good.”
Tony wasn’t seen but his smile was blinding. “You wouldn’t be any fun if you were.”

House couldn’t help but be glad by the comment. He hadn’t forgotten the sexy agent. He just didn’t think the guy would be brave enough to act on his feelings. House wouldn’t have held it against him as he worked with the Navy. Still, there was the other part of House that was glad to hear it.

He could see the stares from his ducklings in horrified fascination at the idea of him on a date. House didn’t care, he just wanted to seal the deal on a date. “For you, sure I think we can figure something out. When are you free?”

The distance was a good thing for both of them Tony sensed. “This Sunday, our team is due downtime.”

“Then get ya ass down to Princeton,” House finished imperiously.

Tony chuckled, “Yes Doctor.”

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Tony left his car at the hospital. He picked up House in his best suit. There was no reason why he couldn’t look good as he caused mischief. He’d asked the reception for the directions towards House’s office.

He opened the doors and all the ducklings turned around at once. Spooky. Still, he was a Federal Agent and could withstand a few looks in his direction, “Is Greg in?”

“Agent Sexy you came!”

Tony saw the others brace for something. They must have assumed he wouldn't take kindly to the
greeting. Tony just snickered, “Yeah, I am. So shall we blow this popsicle stand?”

Grey picked his cane up, “You are way prettier than anything in this place.”

“I have a gun,” Tony reminded him.

Greg stuck his hands out, “But I wanted the cuffs.”

Tony shook his head, knowing he could play this game. “Cuffs, are a punishment. If you want them it is not gonna work.”

Tony could hear as they left, “Oh god, now there are two of them.”

Tony had a feeling this was the start of something awesome.
A tale of Two Cities (Hank Voight)

Chapter Summary

Tony had heard so many stories about Hank Voight that he didn't know what was true. Worlds and cities are about to collide with intriguing results.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Vaahtera, Ghost1 who requested more Chicago franchise characters so I give you Hank Voight.

Oh, and 41 now as a House Part two is added to ever expanding list. :D

Tony hated working undercover sometimes. He was well aware he was good at it. He was, it was just sometimes in doing so. He had to do things he found repugnant like working with dirty cops. He had read all about Sergeant Hank Voight.

The guy was intriguing on paper. It was the arrest that put Tony off the guy. He had to be something though as instead of seeing a hefty prison sentence. They had taken Voight and put him in charge of Intelligence.

Tony despite several years as an Agent was now back to working his first job, Detective. He was standing in his new ‘boss’ office as his file was read.

“You took down Mancuso?”

Tony smirked, “I spoke the language and I dated his daughter. He called me son.”

Hank laughed despite himself. “So why are you back to being a Detective?”
Tony had to think about which way he played this ... For now, he would go with a close approximation of the truth. It was the key to being good at undercover. “I hated being an Agent ... I am a cop who chases down criminals.”

Hank was sure DiNozzo was a rat, meant to cause trouble for him and his department. The trouble was, the lack of information made him difficult to figure out. The guy was competent so he would wait and see. “Just how armed are you?” He asked seeing at least one gun and knife.

Tony smirked, “I will admit to my service weapon. Oh, my backup piece, and my combat folding knife.”

The Sergeant was definitely amused now, “That you will admit to?”

The guy might just fit in around his department after all.

Tony played it off with charm and being a flirt. “Well, we’ve only just met and you don’t strike me as the type to play for the home team.”

Voight had to shake his head at the sheer boldness of the statement, “Get out of here. Go ask Dawson for your first case file.”

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At the end of the day, Olinsky came into Hank’s office. His old friend looked aggravated and bemused all at the same time.

Hank pinched his nose, “What is it? Is he a rat? Did you kill him?”
They were not good questions for a by the book cop. They were valid questions for his old friend.

Alvin looked offended as he protested, “No, I did not.”

Hank let out a relieved smile. After the crap with Internal Affairs. He could ill-afford for another Detective to die in mysterious circumstances. “So what is it?”

Alvin was grinning from ear to ear. “Your new boy is close to cracking Chicago’s biggest madam.”

“Come again?” That was the type of news that bared repeating to check if you were sure.

Alvin smirked and sat back in his chair. This was the type of story that needed telling right. “Well, it goes like this…”

“Get on with it,” Hank wasn’t in the mood for this story to be strung out. He wanted the information yesterday.

Yeah, his friend was enjoying this. Hank had been determined not to like the guy either. If he could bring him Emma Tate’s head. Then he might just start to warm to DiNozzo.

“Well, Tony took Jay to get food. He said it was going to be a proper place. When they come back ... Jay is blushing like a schoolgirl and Erin can’t stop laughing. So I ask what is going on.”

Hank was glad to hear Erin was laughing. His adopted daughter didn’t laugh too much these days. It hurt. “So what did he do? Offer to sell Jay?”
Alvin shrugged, “Well, pretty much. I think he talked himself into a business meal tomorrow. Madame Tate is under the impression Tony has a stable of Male Escorts. He is looking for a merger due to settling down with a sugar daddy.”

Hank had to say he was impressed. Good instincts. He could think on his feet, “I can see how he took down Mancuso.”

“He is that DiNozzo?”

Hank had to grin because whatever his reason for being there. He was competent. That wasn’t in doubt. “The one and only. So how was it left?”

Alvin explained it to him, “Well, they are having lunch on Friday. Jay is his latest ‘acquisition’ and showing him the ropes. It seems Jay needed a job having left the army.”

Voight rolled his eyes. Well, if you had a cliche you may as well roll with it. “I suppose I better congratulate him.”

“Is that my cue to beat it?” Alvin asked, knowing full well what the answer would be.

“Yes.”

Alvin got up, “DiNozzo the boss wants you.”

* * * * *
Tony walked into the office, he’d lost his suit jacket but still looked put together. “Yes, boss.”

“I hear you did good work today.”

Tony was antsy, “Should I apologise?”

Voight rolled his eyes, “Take a seat and let’s talk.”

It helped that they were the last two in the office. Hank spoke plainly, never being fond of false words. “You are here under false pretences. I don’t know why. It bothers me. And yet, you are a good cop. That much is clear. So I don’t know whether I can trust you.”

Tony shrugged as it was not his problem. He didn't care that Voight was calling him out. You see whilst Voight had been checking up on him. He’d been finding out about Hank. His initial opinions on the guy were changing. Tony should have known about covers so his own response was just as honest, “You could ask.”

“Would I get a straight answer?”

Tony looked him straight in the eye, “Sure you will. Why would I lie?”

Hank took a deep breath, “Why are you here?”

Tony smirked, “You make the Commissioner nervous. And he is friends with Secretary Davenport who chose to loan me out to get answers.”
“And what have you found out?”

Tony stood up, “I like it here and I miss being a cop. As long as you are smart, I won’t find anything and we can both enjoy ourselves.”

Hank let him go thinking about what he said.

Hank went to Erin’s place. He needed some time to talk with someone who wouldn’t judge him. It didn’t hurt that Erin was a good soundboard to figure out his thoughts.

“Hey.”

Hank took the step to the side as an invitation to enter. He was glad Halstead wasn’t there. He was well aware that there was something going on between his two detectives. He didn’t care as long as Halstead kept Erin happy. “So what’s eating ya?”

Hank snorted, Erin may have come into his life late on but she did know him. “Newbie.”

“Tony. Smart guy, sharp dresser. Wants to sell Jay to Madam Tate.” Erin responded.

Hank liked the last thought, not that he would admit it. “Yeah I heard all about it.”

They sat back on the couch. “So what’s up?”
“He is spying by his own admission,” Hank answered her, he said it without any inflection. He wanted to see how Erin reacted.

Erin was on alert, ready to hate the guy. She may like Tony but Hank had given her back her life. She owed him everything, “For who?”

“The commissioner but he doesn’t want to be doing it. He is being used as a pawn. He likes being a Detective rather than an Agent.”

Erin smirked, “Is that the only reason you want to keep him?”

Hank frowned, “What are you saying?”

Erin wished she hadn’t said anything. She loved Hank like her father so it was awkward to talk about his love life. Still, he’d asked so she gave him an answer, “I loved Camille but she told me all about your differing tastes.”

The mention of his dead wife would always bring a pang to his heart. He’d loved her a lot and she had dealt with being a cop’s wife. The worst of it was Erin was right. Tony would be the type he looked for in a guy. He was a cop first so he never let himself indulge in those inclinations. Until recently it just wouldn’t be safe.

He went to sleep in Erin’s room thinking about vivid green eyes. Damn her.

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If you had been in the 21st district you would have blinked twice at what you saw. Sergeant Hank Voight cut quite the figure in his custom suit. Tony was at his side wearing Jeans, and a shirt that had several of the women fanning themselves. To round off the pretty picture. Detective Halstead was in what amounted to clubbing clothes.

Behind them, the rest of the intelligence division walked out with big fat grins on their faces.

The desk sergeant had to ask, “What fun is in store today?”

Erin smirked, “Voight’s letting the newbie sell Halstead.”

“Of course he is.”

The surveillance van was getting a masterclass in watching undercover work. Tony had exited the car. He looked unabashed and like he belonged in the high-class establishment. There was no trace of nerves or tugs of his clothes. Voight had stepped up to the plate too, coming in as the one looking to make Tony retire.

Madame Tate pouted upon seeing Hank but brightened seeing Jay. This was going to be fun. “So you decided to bring company with you?”

Tony shrugged, and made out like he was aggravated. “What can I say? Some people are just protective.”

Tate gave a conspiratorial grin, “Yeah, but that is how you like it.”
“Tonio is too good to me. I would hate for anything to happen to him.”

And there was the edge of danger. She could play this game, nor was she was dumb. “So you are in love? And now you are making him stop playing the game?”

She couldn’t hide her sneer. In her business, she had learnt there was no such thing as love. Hank didn’t blink, “I can keep Tony in style and he is looking to offload his business. Do you wish to continue the conversation or are you wasting our time?”

“Your boy and his friend are much more fun to talk to,” she said, rolling her eyes.

Tony went in for the kill, “Look, Emma, I know what you are thinking. It is a cliche and it is stupid. I know this. Look I don’t care what people think, and neither does Harry. I care for my people and I think you will care for them. At least that is what your street rep says.”

She was warming to Tony, it was like he was reeling her in. Ruzek didn’t get it. No one had managed to get close to her. She was too suspicious and too smart. “Man, you would believe he was ready to run away with Hank.”

Erin said nothing. She just shared a look with Alvin as it was closer to the truth than any of them realised. “Stranger things have happened.”

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The business dinner took two hours, and Jay was groped more times than a nightclub session. He was feeling hunted, which was stupid for a former Army Ranger. What he would never unsee was
his boss being lovey-dovey with the newbie. No one would ever say shit to Hank Voight about his personal preferences. There were one too many rumours floating around about what happened to those who crossed him.

Tony had done it. They watched in disbelief. Tate agreed to the sale of the fake company. The recordings from the dinner along with the signatures would be enough to bring her down.

They left the restaurant, Hanks hand on the small of Tony’s back. Smart operatives knew they were under surveillance at all times and never broke cover. It was how you got sloppy and burnt. In their cases, burnt meant dead.

Alvin was the first to comment, “I thought you were selling Halstead?”

“She didn’t want to fight Erin for him,” was Tony’s quick witted response.

The team sucked in a breath. All were aware of the feelings on all three sides. The sides being Erin, Jay, and Hank. The trouble for the potential couple was their boss cast a long shadow. Still, Hank was in a good mood and debating his rules. He was many things but he wouldn’t be a hypocrite. “Well, I wouldn’t want to fight Erin for who she wants.”

He saw Erin spin around to look in his eyes. He nodded and the blinding smile that lasted for a split second made it all worthwhile.

Erin snickered, “Can we go to Molly’s and make a promise not to sell anyone?”

Tony sighed, “You guys have fun. I need to unwind, I hear my piano and Macallan calling me.”
The team split as there wasn’t much more they could do until Tate signed the business forms. Hank watched as all the team split from the scene quickly. Tony turned around, “If you can put up with some jazz piano ... I can offer the good whiskey.”

Hank shrugged, “Sure, why not?”

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The apartment was nice. Too nice for a cop’s salary. Tony saw the question and answered the unspoken question. “My mother’s side of the family, are old money English rose types.”

Hank snorted, “No comment.”

Tony rolled his eyes, “You made no verbal comment but your eyes spoke volumes.”

Hank chuckled, it came out raspy thanks to the whisky. “You know not too many speak to me the way you do.”

Tony did smirk, “I worked under Leroy Jethro Gibbs for ten years. You don’t scare me.”

Hank looked at Tony, and could see the truth in his words. He didn’t scare him, that was true. The atmosphere between them was charged with something more. All it would take was for Hank to break eye contact. The moment would pass and nothing would change.

He didn’t. His eyes kept focusing on those damn kissable lips. He could kill Erin for putting the idea in his head. “If you are not scared of me ... What do you feel?”
Tony slid around on the piano stool. “Too many things that confuse me.”

Hank didn’t agree. “No, I am not, Anthony. What is it?”

Tony looked up at him, “You know I usually hate when people call me Anthony.”

Hank smirked, “You shiver when I say it.”

“Damn observation skills,” Tony sighed with feigned exasperation.

Hanks shrugged, “You have them too. What do they tell you?”

Tony was shy all of a sudden which was stupid. He knew this dance, he played it one too many times. The difference was there were never serious feelings involved with most of the people. “You like what you see ... And you are trying to feel out how receptive I am.”

Hank shrugged, “Your skills haven’t failed you. So what’s the answer?”

Tony looked at his boss and took a deep breath. There was no easy answer here. If he spoke the truth about how much he wanted to explore the connection between them. Then, he was admitting that his life in Washington was over. Tony bit back his vicious inside voice that said apart from the job what did he have?

If he spoke a lie, then he would always regret it. He’d gone through too much of life regretting what might have been. He swore to himself to never let a moment pass him by.

“I am glad you are not as you seemed,” Tony spoke with rare honesty. At the start of this, he’d
listened to the rumours about him being dirty. Tony hated dirty cops after his partner, Danny, and Baltimore.

Hank laughed as that was the kindest thing someone had said about him. “So do I apply leverage to the Commissioner and make your switch a permanent thing?”

Wow. No dating or easing him into the idea. Tony had to play the cautious one. “I will drive you nuts.”

Hank grinned at him, “Probably but I don’t mind.”

Tony huffed, “And if I talk too much or tell you every movie quote?”

Hank moved closer and Tony sucked in a breath. This was not how he imagined things going in Chicago. Hank spoke softly,

“Then I will just distract you.”

Tony didn’t whimper, it was a novel experience. He was usually doing the seducing, not being the seduced. He was okay with the switch up. “How will you do that?”

Tony didn’t get a verbal answer. He was blown away by the kiss. It was dominating and a battle, of epic fun, promising so many things. Tony didn’t think, he gave himself over to the emotions. The kiss broke and he couldn’t help but be disappointed,

“I have too many suits.”
Hank smirked, “Why would you need suits with me?”

Tony’s mind wandered to a fun, sinful place. “On a first date?”

“I will still respect you in the morning,” Hank promised him and there was no more talking.

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Tony did have respect and a new job. It seemed the Commissioner had the burning desire to create a liaison between Intelligence and the rest of the city. He felt that Voight didn’t have the right people skills to be effective. Tony with his people skills was such a guy. The change in role was perfect. Tony excelled and flourished going back to a role he loved. Hank didn’t want to kill as many people as he didn’t have to speak to them

Win, win.

Oh, and at the end of the day, they went home and distracted each other.
An Agent Scorned (Tobias Fornell)

Chapter Summary

Tony wanted out of the body bag, he never realised just what else he would get of at the same time.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for I_Kill_Zombies, Mefeather, Red_Pink_Dots, and MamaT who all asked for Tobias Fornell.

Tony could not believe the situations he ended up in. He was in a body bag being taken back to the FBI all so Gibbs could get ahead in the Air Force One investigation. He hadn’t missed the intrigued looks Gibbs was giving Agent Todd.

Still, he didn’t care about that. He just wanted out of the bag. He knew what Gibbs had said. He didn’t care. It was too hot and he was getting ill. He figured wriggling would get people’s attention.

Yep, the scream told him his plan worked. The zip opened and he gasped in free air. It was so much better than it was not two seconds ago. “You are a god amongst men.”

Fornell snickered, “My ex-wife would disagree.”

Tony smirked, “Then she is stupid. She did marry Gibbs so there is that.”

Tobias looked at Gibb’s SFA with a new light. He’d always assumed that he was there for Jethro’s amusement. He also wasn’t blind to the fact the young Agent was exactly like Jethro’s male tastes. “Now, how do you know that?”

Tony looked serious for a second, “I don’t work for anyone I haven’t checked out. I learnt that after
my boss tried to sell me to the Mob.”

One of his other Agents spat out his coffee. The casual flirting was odd but that was ridiculous. “What? Who is this boss?”

Fornell grinned, “Gentleman, I give you Agent Gibb’s protege, Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo. You should know he has stayed with Gibbs for four years.”

The looks at Tony, turned admiring. It was freaky. “What’s the big deal?”

Fornell snorted, “Gibbs reputation precedes him. He needs to take better care of his team. I could kidnap you.”

Tony’s eyes twinkled, “Is it a kidnapping if I am willing?”

“Not by the FBI definition.”

Tony shrugged, “Well, I can come with you and let you know everything I do about the investigation.”

Fornell wanted to laugh. He was getting a leg up in the investigation and he got to deal with someone far prettier than Jethro. One of his workers needed to learn to think before he spoke. “Won’t that make your boss mad?”

Tony shrugged, still half in the body bag. “Well, he threw me in a body bag and seems way more interested in the Secret Service Agent than what I can offer.”

“So you’re an agent scorned?”

Tony’s smile grew wider. “Oh, I haven’t even begun.”
Tobias hadn’t seen anyone look so attractive in quite awhile. He had to keep telling himself that he was too old. Why would Tony like an old guy like him?

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The Director was amazed at the progress they had made. “So you have got all this even without the body?”

“Yes Sir,” Tobias was proud of what they’d accomplished. “It is thanks to the help of our NCIS Liaison.”

“We have one of those?” His boss asked in curiosity.

Fornell shrugged it off, “Well, Sir. It goes like this, Agent Gibbs decided to use his SFA as a decoy in the body bag. He was aggrieved and chose to add us on our side of the investigation.”

The Director smirked, “I will make sure our paperwork reflects that. What was the Agent’s name?”

“It was Agent Anthony DiNozzo Sir.”

Tobias was treated to quite the sight. His composed boss spat his coffee out. Such an action his boss was tantamount to sacrilege. “DiNozzo, who took down Mancuso?”

“Yes, he is.”

Now, his boss was chuckling. “See what you can do to make it permanent. I think I’m going to suggest a new programme. We need to foster inter-agency cooperation, a round of liaison agents will help.”
Fornell didn’t care how he chose to phrase it. Tony would be staying around the office for longer. He could work with that.

He walked back towards his office to see DiNozzo typing out his report. Tony looked up, “So what did the boss say?”

Fornell rolled his eyes, "He is so pleased he wants to encourage a round of inter-agency liaison. To foster inter-agency cooperation."

Tony pouted because whilst the idea sounded fun. “Yeah but I wanted to ask you out.”

Fornell had to laugh, “You wanted to ask an old guy like me out? Why?”

Tony stood up and closed the door. He didn’t care what the others thought about him. This was still Tobias’ place of work. “You are competent, caring, funny and sexy.”

Tobias huffed out a breath in surprise. In his mind, that description should be the other way round. “You are too young to want me.”

Tony moved closer, more like stalked closer. “Let me know my own mind. I say you are enough.”

Fornell looked into those eyes and believed him. “You win and as you are not part of the Agency... There are no fraternisation rules.”

“Will your Director see it that way?” Tony explained, “I don’t want to make your life difficult.”

Tobias smirked, “From the conversation I just had ... I think he would be okay with me seducing you over to the Agency.”

Tony’s eyes widened but he couldn’t deny he liked the idea. Fornell wasn’t done,
“And besides I hope you are difficult in the best possible way.”

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Gibbs knocked on Fornell’s door. “What are you playing at?”

Fornell had been friends with the man too long. He didn’t need any more context, “You mean Tony?”

Gibbs glared, “Of course I mean Tony, he is my Agent.”

Fornell just rolled his eyes, “He is not a possession Jethro. He is a human being.”

Gibbs repeated, “You have no right to interfere.”

Fornell sipped on his beer, “I didn’t. I took advantage of a situation and I really must say thank you. Throwing him out like that.”

Gibbs reared back, “But I didn’t. He was a distraction to grab the body.”

Fornell snorted, “Yeah, you used your valued investigator SFA to distract us. All whilst you waltzed off with the Secret Service Agent. I can’t imagine how someone would get the wrong idea.”

“You stole him.”

Tony had been hiding in the bedroom listening. His respect for Gibbs was disappearing by the second. He sounded less like the leader of the MRCT and more like an angry child who hadn’t gotten his own way. He was still dressed in a towel and knew if he walked out like this he could settle the argument once and for all.
This was bigger than just shutting up Gibbs. This was announcing what they were. It had been two months. Gibbs was pissed now because he’d submitted the paperwork to transfer fully. The FBI Director was asking him to work as his personal liaison. It was a job that he found suited him. He listened to all the information from all sources and he could piece the jigsaw together. He and Toby, already had all their paperwork changed so no rules were being broken.

“Hey Toby, where did you go?”

Tony looked at their guest. He started boldly. He was meant to be here, Gibbs was the uninvited guest. “Hey Gibbs. Can you pick this up some other time?”

“You are with Tobias?”

Tony rolled his eyes, “Yes, now please leave. I wish you every success with the MRCT.”

He held out his hand but Gibbs stormed away. He hated losing anything so Tony didn’t hold his poor manners against him. They were finally alone in Toby’s apartment. He looked at his lover and dropped his towel. “Now where were we?”

Tobias pulled him close and they forgot about everything else.

To this day, no one mentioned the new Deputy Director by name unless they wished to face Gibbs’ wrath. It had taken only two years from transferring for the promotion.
The Bad Boy of Starling ... tamed? (Oliver Queen)

Chapter Summary

Tony had been born a DiNozzo but hr was raised a Paddington. It was a favour to his Uncle Clive that saw him at a Queen Party running into everyone's loveable bad buy - Oliver Queen.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is all the more awesome thanks to a beta read.

Also, the chapter is for Vt_girl1701 who wanted all the more hotness! Hope you enjoy!

Tony hated moving in Paddington circles. He was not stupid. He knew where the trust fund came from. He hated having to go to these old riche parties. Uncle Clive was in the US and he owed the man. Tony would have been in serious trouble if his Uncle hadn’t stepped in. His Dad had disowned him at twelve and sent him to boarding school.

His Uncle had pitched a fit when he found out. When it came to his next academic year, he’d enrolled in Eton and got to grips with the English Education system. He’d also been enrolled as Anthony Paddington.

Moving towards him was a vision in a suit. Oh, the bad boy of Starling City was gracing them with his presence. “Nice to meet you.”

Queen smirked at him, also giving him an easy once over. “Delighted, I’m Oliver Queen.”

Queen cocked his head to the side, intelligence brimming in his eyes. All of the pretty boy act disappearing, “And who are you? I would remember someone who makes my day better just by standing.”

Tony had to laugh at the audaciousness of the line. It was bold when you were not sure of someone's orientation. Queen was arrogant to assume it wouldn’t matter. “I’m Anthony Paddington.”

“Ohm, they are English and you are American,” Queen observed.

Tony could give as good as he got, “And you are rude whereas your mother is delightful.”
Queen chuckled, “Touche, isn’t that what the Brits’ say.”

Tony rolled his eyes, “What do you want Queen?”

“It’s Oliver.”

Tony was getting an understanding of what it was like to be the chased and not the chaser. He hoped he wasn’t such a douche. He shouldn’t be as he used the English manners to great effect. The accent too if it would help him secure a date. “Is it?”

Oliver pouted, “Now it doesn’t have to be like that ... Our families are talking about a joint venture.”

Tony grinned, “Well in that case, you will need Uncle Clive. He’s the businessman.”

“And what are you?”

“I’m the cop.” Tony answered and he was good at it. He had never pictured working for Scotland Yard but he was good at it. It was where he had also learnt the art of socialising at such events. That’s why he was attending with his Uncle, and not his cousin, Crispin, who had all the personality of a wet fish.

“How exciting! Does that mean you have cuffs?”

Tony rolled his eyes as it was hardly the most original thing he had ever heard. “You’re funny Queen, don’t let anyone tell you any different.”

Queen slid closer, “Don’t be like that, you know you like me really.”

Tony thought about it, “Well, I am not bored.”

Not bored, turned into a transAtlantic relationship. Thank god they were rich and could afford the air-fare. The press couldn’t decide just what place Tony held in Oliver’s life.

It all came crashing down two years later when a boat containing Robert and Oliver Queen sank in the South Atlantic. Tony grieved but he threw himself into his work. Five years later he had reinvented himself. He was currently on loan to the NCIS from the Yard. As a result, he went overboard on his character. He even asked to be known by his father’s name. He’d phoned his Uncle to explain his reasons. The jobs he was performing in America were riskier than normal. The last thing he wanted to do was cause grief to his family or see them come to harm.
Gibbs looked at his SFA in confusion. Morrow had called him into his office and told him about his New Agent. He was on loan from Scotland Yard but was too good to waste. “You need his investigation skills.”

Gibbs couldn’t argue. Tony was rough around the edges but he knew how to get the information they needed. Once, Tony had the information he was a natural at slotting the idea together. They were a two-man team and their closure rate was the best of all American Alphabet agencies.

His Agent was handsome. Gibbs may be as straight as an arrow but he wasn’t blind. He just couldn’t understand how, whilst being an outrageous flirt, he had never seen Tony in a serious relationship. He was no stranger to grief but Tony was too young to be as bitter as he was about Shannon.

They were at his house a few too many beers to the good. “You ever think about settling down DiNozzo?”

“A bit difficult ... He is at the bottom of the ocean.”

Gibbs hadn’t expected that answer. “Come again?”

“Oliver Queen was so close to ‘taming’ my heart but then his boat sank.”

Gibbs remembered the papers. The Queens were big news even outside of Starling City. Their family was due to make a big deal with an English family and it was supposed to be sealed the old fashion way with a marriage.

“You’re good.”

Tony smirked, “You would never know it how I act. I can move in English Upper Class circles and no one would know I was American.”

Gibbs had to tread carefully here, as he didn’t want to be a hypocrite. “Would Olivier want you to be a nun?”

Tony chuckled even if it came out a little watery. “No, he’d be horrified but I just can’t pretend.”

Gibbs understood. He’d had three marriages end because he couldn’t pretend. It was a tragedy what had happened to Shannon and his daughter, Kelly. “I get it. I do Tony but don’t end up like me.”
“I don’t know ... you’re not too bad and you rock the silver fox look.”

Gibbs shook his head, “I am going to limit the time you and Abby spend together.”

It didn’t help but their conversation let the pair understand each other again.

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The rules remained the same. The pair cycled new members onto the team and trained them up but then they went back to working as a pair. It was way too much work for two men but it was just how they liked it. It didn’t let them think about other aspects about their lives.

The TV screen was showing the news as always. Tony turned white and fell back on his chair. He was seeing the words and the face and he couldn’t believe it. There was no such thing as a happy ending. He just hoped to get justice for their families.

“Boss.”

McGee and David who were their current two turned at the tone of his voice. They were about to make a snide comment. Christ, he must be looking rough. They stayed quiet and let him get his breathing under control. Damn Plague. Tony didn’t care about his snotty co-workers. There was a miracle. “Is it real?”

Gibbs was laughing. His focus was behind him. “Why don’t you ask him?”

Tony whirled around and there he stood. The love of his fucking life so alive and perfect. They were going to make their second chance count. He found his legs moving without his conscious thought.

Oliver cupped his cheek. He could have made a comment about not being a girl but he didn’t care. Oliver was alive. “You are here.”

Oliver nodded, “Not even hiding as DiNozzo would stop me.”

Tony chuckled weakly but he wasn’t interested in words. He pulled Oliver in by the collar of his shirt. “Shut up and kiss me.”

“Yes Sir.”
Tony broke the call, hearing the cat-calls and blushed. Oliver hadn’t let go of him. It was okay as he was not too fond of his letting his lover go either. “Boss, I need some time.”

Gibbs smirked, “Go and get your man Tony.”

Tony left the building not too caring if he never came back. He felt his phone explode with demanding texts. As it was a work phone, he chucked it the bush. Gibbs had his proper phone number.

He was working on his happy ending, it looked promising once more.
A Walk on the Darkside (Red Redington)

Chapter Summary

Reinvention was the mother of all survival. Tony was a master of it when he was a cop/federal agent and now forced to play the other side of the fence, he was even better.

Chapter Notes

Beta Read by the awesome Edronhia. The Scene may start with what appears a coerced relationship but it is not. Tony knows his own mind and choices but please be warned.

This chapter is for crazyness101 who wanted Blacklist Tony - this is the best I could do.

Tony didn’t understand what had happened. “You are fucking kidding me?”

Sheppard shook his head, “No Benoit has sold you to Reddington.”

Tony was breathing in and out. It wasn’t quite the same with his diminished lung capacity. “Just like that?”

Jenny shook his head. “No, not just like that. He is working on information given by Trent Kort.”

Tony was not a cold blooded killer and yet he would quite happily put a bullet in Trent’s head. He doubted he would weep either. The man did not know when to stop pushing his buttons. The best part, he was on the phone with his supposed boss and handler. He knew where this conversation was going. He should have seen it. She was burning him. If he was to get out of is this alive it would be with his own initiative.

This was going to be a great conversation with his girlfriend. The bitch of it was he really liked Jeanne. She was sweet, funny and so smart it was only all too easy to fall in love with her.

“This was off the books Tony, you know what happens.”
Wow. She was stone-cold. She couldn’t even fake compassion. Tony didn’t care, he would get even. He didn’t know how yet but he would.

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Reinvention was the mother of all survival. Tony was a master of it when he was a cop/federal agent and now forced to play the other side of the fence, he was even better. They were stopping in Italy as it was his birthday.

Tony had certainly lived a whirlwind life since staying with Red. He could have walked away but how? His career had been scorched by Jenny and her vendetta so any of his actions would be treated as criminal. There was no way he was spending time in jail, with his looks and former profession - he was sure to have a good time. Not.

They were eating dinner in a quaint little restaurant overlooking Lake Como. He looked at Raymond sitting there so at ease. He moved through the world like it was his and everyone was there at his discretion. Tony envied that certainty in life. He sipped his drink and asked him, “Why me?”

Raymond looked at him with fond amusement, “Why you? Or, why do I wait until you come willing?”

They were both good questions. Tony had steeled himself to being used in every way the moment he was sold. Trent Kort’s gleeful grin had hinted at it. Instead, he’d been whisked around the world and wined and dined. Red didn’t ask for more than companionship and the chance to win his heart. It was heavy handed but Tony didn’t have anything to lose.

“Both.”

Raymond put his wine down. “You didn’t know it but I saw you one day. You looked so downtrodden and weary.”

Tony snorted, “That hardly says wine and dine me.”

Red smirked at him, “Even at your most exhausted you were still the most gorgeous person in the room.”
Tony didn’t know what to say. The idea of being appreciated was a novel concept and wasn’t that sad? “You took me away from my lawful life because I looked exhausted?”

“There is nothing sadder in this world than wasted potential and the destruction of beauty. I wanted to find out more about you and your boss provided a neat excuse to extend that wish.”

Tony had to sigh because it all went back to the unsanctioned operation. Benoit had been the cause of so many of his ills. It was his fault for taking the operation when his instincts screamed no but at least he was still alive, unlike many burnt operatives. He knew the risks but despite appearances, he had no death wish.

Tony couldn’t complain about his life. Red was good to him. He could have left, he might not have been able to go back to NCIS but that was okay. If that Agency had had its way. He would have been dead within a year. He could see that now. If he was honest with himself he liked Red. He was under no illusion that Red was an honest man but deep down he was honest. He didn’t like the law breaking but he could live with it.

He was turning into every gangster moll cliche and the irony wasn’t lost on Tony. Still, he made his peace with the fact.

Raymond looked at him with his usual intensity. “You’ve decided something, haven’t you?”

Tony chuckled, “That I can be happy.”

“With me and all that I do?” Raymond asked him. This was important and his tone reflected it.

Tony let out a breath of relief because his path was decided. “Yeah, I know who you are Ray’.”

Red rolled his eyes, “You do know that you are the only one who can call me that?”
“Yeah but I am special,” Tony replied teasing. His time with Raymond had let him find himself again.

Red sipped his wine, “Oh yes, you are a real special sno...”

Tony knew just what he was going to say and he stopped him right there. “You finish that statement and I won’t sleep with you for a week.”

Red laughed, delighted by the change in the conversation. He didn’t think he would be able to convince Tony for at least another month. He did so love it when a plan came together and even better, there was no coercion. He was a criminal and a nasty one but he found sexual violence distasteful and repugnant.

Red held his hand and spoke from the heart, “I would give you the world if I could.”

Tony grinned, “I know. I want Trent Kort to pay but apart from that I’m good. Just don’t get cocky, I would be pissed if you got arrested.

“Says the Ex-Lawman.”

Tony shrugged, “Jenny saw to it that I can never be one again. I could get pissed but what’s the point?”

Red shrugged as he had no good answer, “I thought you would want to end her to be honest.”

Tony smirked because even Red, the Concierge of Crime underestimated him. “Oh darling, it is already done. When the car ‘blew up’ with me inside and I was declared dead ... Well, there was a package delivered to Leon Vance and Philip Davenport.”

Red snorted, “And you wonder why I find you sexy. That was truly machiavellian.”

Tony knew his Uncle had a saying, in for a penny, in for a pound. He had made his choices, “How
“Shall we take this to the bedroom?”

It was still Tony’s choice just like it had been from the beginning. Tony took his hand and let his world be rocked. You can’t change the world but there were ways to influence them. Red still caused mischief and Tony, and Dembe, the bodyguard were by Red’s side. The difference was Red’s targets always seemed to have a moral side to them these days. Some guessed it might have something to do with his new beau.

At the time, the gossip was that Red’s flavour of the month was responsible for his softening. Well, that was until one of the competitor’s tried to capture Red’s boy. By all accounts, the death was quick. A knife to the throat wasn’t civilised but it was efficient. After that, no one treated Red’s lover as a pretty arm accessory - he was dangerous in his own right even if he was pretty.

They couldn’t explain how anyone who tried to infiltrate Red’s organisations were dispatched with ruthless efficiency. The rumours floated that it was Red’s boy but that would be crazy. How would he know Law types?

The truth was stranger than fiction.
Caffeine is Serious Business (Eliot Spencer)

Chapter Summary

Tony meets a cute guy who likes caffeine more than Gibbs.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Crazyness101, yanagi, Queeneofthedeer and the awesome Edronhia, who beta read the chapter.

Oh, and the scene that was the inspiration for this story can be found here...
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRve_JBoIro

Serious Business is Caffeine

Tony was on a coffee run. Gibb’s level of bastardry (Yes, it was a word) had reached new levels of epicness this morning and Tony had no idea why. If he found the person, Tony would personally eviscerate them. There was only one thing that would settle Gibbs, one way to soothe the savage beast. Caffeine. The solution to most ills when it came to Leroy Jethro Gibbs.

He was minding his own business when two suits raced past him. They were in pursuit of a harried woman and Tony’s suspicious radar kicked up into high gear. Now, Tony was not stupid - he was well aware that there was no criminal look. Still, when he looked at the petite brunette she didn’t scream dangerous.

She already had two rescuers so he stood back to evaluate the situation. He didn’t think it would go sideways but he had easy access to his gun nonetheless. Tony had to shake his head at the terrible conmen. There was no way that those suits were Federal Agents. You didn’t need to be the son of a conman to know it, you would just need eyes.

The one guy who was holding the chased woman close took the lead. “Now you see you made two mistakes. First - you flashed ya fake ass FBI badges. And second,”

Tony found himself wanting to find out what the second point was. “Second thing ... you spilt his coffee.”

Tony found himself following in the direction he pointed. The guy looked pissed, covered in coffee and had steam out coming out of his ears. He was aware coffee was a serious business due to his time dealing with Gibbs. Still, the level of pain he delivered to the scumbags was extreme. It spoke of special training on a Gibb’s level.
Tony watched the guy move and his eyes may have zeroed in on the guy’s ass. It was a nice ass, worthy of watching.

The one goon had the cheek of asking Tony for help. Tony decided to act, “You see, I am a real Federal Agent so I think I am going to arrest you.”

Both goons were in pain having been schooled, “And you are not going to arrest my attackers.”

Tony knew the commenter would be smart enough to listen to what he was saying. “Nah, I saw you chase this poor woman and these two rescuers are real life heroes. Plus, you scalded your attacker first and he reacted in self-defense.”

“This is a conspiracy.”

Tony chuckled because it was always someone else’s fault. It was never their fault for being a dumbass criminal. “No, the conspiracy is you dumbasses trying to make me late for work.”

Tony handed his coffee, not Gibbs’ to the cute guy. He felt sorry for him as coffee was sacred to some people. “Here you are.”

The guy looked startled and appreciative, “Are you sure, Agent ...?”

“Anthony DiNozzo and yeah, I am.”

Elliot managed a smile and Tony could see what a complicated guy he was. Tony found himself wanting to peel back his layers as well as his clothes. He could guess him being law enforcement would make him leery but he hoped he could talk some more.

“I’m Eliot.”

The way the friend looked shocked made Tony think he’d actually got his real name. Huh. So maybe he had more of a chance than he thought. Tony kept it light and friendly, “So if you are still in the city tonight can we grab a coffee together?”

The mate started to speak, “Now I don...”

Eliot shook his head, “Hardison I don’t care. I am doing something for me.” Looking back to Tony “I would love to go out for a coffee. Let’s just never talk shop.”

Tony had to laugh, “Yeah I can agree to that. I think we’ll have more fun and talk more freely if we do.”

Eliot smirked and Tony was in trouble. “Sounds good.”

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It was more than good. Tony and Eliot would steal time whenever they were in the same city. Tony didn’t let anyone hurt Eliot, or use his past against him. Overall, Tony liked Nate, Eliot’s boss. Until there was one time where he traded on Eliot’s guilt over his mercenary past.

Tony railed on him so hard that much to the surprise of the Leverage team - Nate apologised. Eliot never asked Tony for help with their cases but Tony would bitch about things he could. Eliot tried to
never interfere in Tony’s work. They had an agreement that worked, to love each other but not to talk about work. It made sense considering their love of each other and their professions not exactly meshing.

Eliot managed to abide by the agreement until the Military At Home case. Tony had come home heartbroken with a sore throat. The story came tumbling out and Eliot didn’t think. He reacted.

“Nate, it’s me. We have a new target and it’ll be a fun challenge - they need to pay but I can’t kill them. Tony would never forgive me.”

*But that is another story.*
Life on Mars? (Mark Watney-the Martian)

Chapter Summary

Tony hated how much he loved Mark. If he was selfish, he would tell Mark that the Mars mission was stupid and too risky and how dare he risk himself?

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for Dema and big thanks to Edronhia for the rapid beta.

For those who have not seen the Martian, Matt Damon plays an astronaut, Mark Watney who gets stuck on Mars.

Life on Mars

Tony hated how much he loved Mark. If he was selfish, he would tell Mark that the Mars mission was stupid and too risky and how dare he risk himself?

He wished he could be that guy but he couldn’t. He wasn’t a hypocrite and Mark had put up with his life first as a cop and then a Federal Agent. Tony tried to be many things but not a hypocrite. It sucked as to make sure both of their lives weren’t affected by their choice of lover they kept their relationship secret. It was the weakest cover story but they had been roommates for a long time.

Tony would flirt low key with women to maintain the facade. It was the funniest and most ironic thing Mark had ever heard - Tony, the player. The amount of women Tony had been with since he’d met Mark was zero. Still, if you went to the NCIS office you would think he was the biggest player.

They did do one thing, and Tony used his favours to do it. They married before Mark went to Mars and the favours were used to keep it out of the press. He had one person stand up for him, Gibbs, and Mark had his friend, Beck, who was also going on the Ares Mission.
Everything was fine, Tony had used the time Mark was away to study for his doctorate. It turns out being married to a sexy geek made Tony want to study. Mark had some wicked incentives for studying but they would probably raise eyebrows at a University.

The day was standard. He got to the office, avoided killing his teammates for their unprofessionalism and got on with his tasks. He wanted to get home on time. It was day five of their mission and it was Mark’s time for a personal call. Tony couldn’t wait. He knew this was what Mark needed to do and it would kill him not too.

“So who has got you so excited?” Ziva sneered.

Tony normally would engage Ziva to annoy her as it was amusing. Not today. He didn’t have the energy.

“I was doing my paperwork to get it done on time. You should try it.”

McGee looked up in shock, Tony very rarely bit back in that way. It was noticeable that Ziva had no retort. He tried to defend Ziva, “There is no need to be like that Tony.”

“Oh, there is. You need to know that as SFA I have every right to remind you when you are not doing your damn job.”

Any other comments stopped when Tony saw the Media Relation head for NASA, Annie Montrose, in the bullpen. He paled on sight because she was too busy a woman to be here for just any reason. “I need to take this conversation.”

McGee wanted to dismiss this as flirting with a hot woman. He didn’t because of the way Tony reacted to her - he looked shook up. He couldn’t think of many things that scared him, he’d survived the plague for Christ sake.
Tony wasn’t going to let anyone see him react to whatever news she had. It was private, personal business. He took Annie into the meeting room. They had already met, they were in love and risk takers but they were not irresponsible. Annie Montrose’s job was difficult enough as it was, they refused to let her be blindsided should they be discovered.

Tony didn’t bother to make this difficult, “Don’t say it.”

Annie did look sad, “They had to scrub, a solar storm hit faster and nastier than anyone could predict. As they aborted Mark was hit with debris. His monitor flatlined. For what it was worth it was quick.”

Tony missed the chair as he collapsed onto the floor. This was all his worst fears at once. His chest felt tight and he couldn’t breathe. “When?” He wheezed out because this changed everything.

“We found out an hour ago.”

Tony sighed because he was well aware of how NASA worked. “How long until it is announced and my name is dragged into the press?”

“What do you mean?” Annie asked him in confusion.

Tony chuckled but it was hollow and devoid of any humour, “You will feed me to the press and the story to deflect from the failure and play up the heartache angle.”

Annie sighed because this sucked and he was right. It wasn’t personal but this failure could see end of the mars missions.

“I have twenty hours before I have to give a press release.”

Tony still was on the floor with his arms hugging his legs. “I see, well, small tiny bright side my bitch of a director can’t force me to go undercover now. Christ, I will never be able to go undercover again.”

Annie was not the total bitch she portrayed, “What are your degrees?”
Tony looked sheepish, and the odd question considering all of his feelings threw him and he answered with honesty. “Phys. Ed from Ohio State, a Masters in psychology from George Mason and I am ABD in political science from Georgetown.”

“You ever think about Media Relations?”

Tony had experienced job offers before but never under such trying circumstances. Grief was all he could feel and he was numb to anything else but even so, he wasn’t naive. “I’ll let you know. When will you want me at NASA?”

She chuckled, “What do you mean?”

Tony sighed, he still hadn’t got off the floor. He figured his husband was dead so it was allowed. “You will want to control the media and them having access to me stops that.”

She looked sorry knowing it was the last thing Tony wanted or needed. He would be surrounded by the very place that got his husband killed. “NASA may not be your favourite place but the centre is secure and no press are allowed in living quarters.”

Tony nodded, “I will settle my affairs and phone you.”

She handed her card over, “I am on the line when you need me. It is not the best circumstances but we look after our own Tony.”

He nodded.

She left having said her piece, she hoped there was someone who knew about Mark. His boss was standing outside the door.

“What did you do to him?”

Annie was under no illusion what she was about to say. “I just delivered the worst possible news I could. Look after him.”

“Don’t tell me how to watch a man’s six,” was the gruff reply.
Annie chose not to say anything and left the building. When she reached her car, which she knew was bug free she phoned Teddy, the Director of the Agency. “It’s done.”

“What did you do?”

Annie rolled her eyes, “I offered him a job as my Deputy.”

“Why?” Teddy asked her in blatant curiosity.

Annie snorted, “The guy is gorgeous, great to put in front of the cameras. He hides his intelligence and is according to Mark the best undercover operative ever. Oh, and his education isn’t lacking either.”

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Back inside NCIS, Tony had no idea about people’s plans. He was a man adrift and for once, all his masks were down. This was him and it hurt. He didn’t know what to say, or how to act. It was scary in a way Tony hadn’t felt since his had Dad had left him alone in a hotel room as a kid.

Gibbs stormed into the room and froze for a second seeing Tony crumpled on the floor. He could hear the musketeers outside, trying to get in. Idiots. Gibbs had locked the door so they should have caught a clue.

Tony didn’t need the hyenas, he needed a friend. “Let it hurt, grieve and I will be here for you.”

Tony chuckled weakly because damn, it must be bad. Gibbs was being nice to him and it was first time since he’d come back from his siesta. “Mark’s dead.”

Gibbs had to think. His memories were not as they should be. It was a good thing too, christ, he’d got it so wrong. He didn’t care about how it looked to anyone else, he slid down next to Tony and hugged him. “I’m so sorry Tony, I never wanted you to know how it feels.”

Tony let the tears fall but he didn’t acknowledge them. “The press is going to have my name by the
end of the day as they sensationalise the story. It won’t matter he was a human being with a family. All they will care about is the story ... Gibbs it will take away my work not that they will think about that.”

Gibbs just gave him a one-armed hug, “We will go talk to Jenny and then I am taking you home.”

Tony sighed as right now, staying on the floor and ignoring the world sounded good. “On the bright side... I don’t have to seduce Benoit’s daughter.”

“You what!”

Tony didn’t think about it he explained all about what Jenny had demanded he do. It didn’t sit right with Mark away on Mars.

Gibbs rubbed his face, “Oh, we’re all going to have a “clear the air” meeting.”

It was at that point that McGee and David fell through the door they’d been listening at so closely. They got up without an ounce of shame. Gibbs was the one to bark first, “What do you think you are doing?”

“We wanted to know if Tony was okay,” McGee tried.

Tony didn’t care anymore, he decided venting was cathartic. He may be lost right now but he could tell his time at NCIS was at an end so there was no point in holding back. “No, you just hoped I was in trouble, well news flash dumbasses, I am not as stupid or as promiscuous as you were led to believe.”

Ziva and Tim stood there with gaping mouths, outrage clear on their faces. Gibbs found himself smiling. He was ready to have Tony’s back like he should have all along. He got it wrong but he would make it right. He’d been ready to jump in but in this case, he didn’t need to.

“Gibbs aren’t you going to say something?” David demanded.

“It’s about time you go and write your damn reports. Tony and I need to talk to Jenny”

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The conversation did not go how they expected. “You are married and you didn’t inform the
Tony shook his head, “That is incorrect Madam Director.”

She pursed her lips, “So who knew?”

“Well I did,” Gibbs had to say, “I did stand up for him at his wedding.”

Jenny pursed her lips, “Your name is about to be splashed all over the media and you will be expected to be the grieving spouse.”

Tony looked at her sharply, “That is exactly what I am.”

“You will be ruined for undercover work.”

Tony snorted knowing the angle she was most pissed about, her precious unsanctioned op. “You know what? I am sorry if I cannot help you with your vendetta with Benoit but I have other priorities.”

“Like what?”

Tony growled, “My husband is dead Madam Director.”

She rolled her eyes, “You are fired, you will be no use to the agency.”

Tony snorted, “Actually I will save you the trouble. I quit as NASA offered me a job. I was dead set on hating their guts but they do show loyalty to their own at least.”

Gibbs had never been so proud of Tony. “You know what Tony, I think I am going to talk to Davenport and then retire. I am done with this crazy.”
Jenny was seeing her whole world crumble beneath her feet. She wouldn’t survive the fallout with her job.

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Tony had taken the role at NASA. He’d delivered a simple but heartfelt eulogy for Mark as was his right as his husband. The fact that it gave a layer of protection to Teddy Sanders, the Director of NASA - well all the better.

The big honchos were all in a meeting. It was crazy how quickly Tony had become one of them. Teddy offered a simple, “It was a good eulogy.”

Tony wasn’t sure what he could say, “Thank you.”

Working on the problems was a good way to distract himself and it helped that it was Mark’s agency. It allowed him to stay close.

A young blonde raced into the meeting and stood to attention. It wasn’t difficult to understand when faced with the Head of the Agency; the Head of the Mars missions, the Flight Director; the Head of Media Relations and her Deputy.

“You need to see this.”

Tony nearly fell over but it was brilliant. He had hope once again after seeing the photo.

Written in the red dust was the message “I <3 ya T and I am comin’ home.” There was only one person who would write that message. Mark was alive and coming back to him.

Tony would do everything in his power to make that happen.
Chapter Summary

Tony shook his head, “No, I will make sure the press steers away from that story narrative but they are going to start asking how are we going to get him off, Mars. In all honesty, I would like to know what is the plan to get my husband off that rock and back home?”

Chapter Notes

I felt mean leaving Mark and Tony where they were in the last chapter so I give you part two where they attempt to rescue his ass from Mars!

BIG SPOILERS: for the movie Martian 2015 starring Matt Damon
As always, thanks to Edronhia

Escape from Mars (Mark Watney style)

The Press Conference was about as exhausting as you might expect when you announce your husband is alive, and stranded on Mars. Tony had done the conference buoyant on the news his husband was alive and because he and Annie knew how to play the press. It would control the story narrative, the focus would be the not-so-tragic love story rather than the fact NASA had stranded an astronaut on Mars.

In the main conference room, Teddy Sanders, the Director of NASA, was waiting for them along with Vincent Kapoor, Head of Mars Missions.

“Well, that was masterful,” was Teddy’s judgement.

Vincent frowned because bless him, while he was great at rocket science - it was subtle interactions he missed. “I am not following.”
Tony snorted, “Did you ever let him go in front of the camera?”

Annie rolled her eyes, “Not by fucking choice.”

Teddy didn’t get it, “You should be happy so why are you still swearing?”

Annie Montrose was the best in the business, hence the title. She had on more than one occasion orchestrated events to sweet talk congress out of money. Her personality, to describe it politely, was fiery. Her quirks were ignored on the grounds of her skills - that and Sanders liked the fact there was at least one person who stood up to him.

Tony got it and to be honest he was of the same opinion, “Right now, they are stuck on the romanticism. He is alive and love has a chance.”

Sanders winced because he was hoping they could direct the focus away from that narrative, “And soon it will turn to why did NASA strand a scientist on Mars?”

Tony shook his head, “No, I will make sure the press steers away from that story narrative but they are going to start asking how are we going to get him off Mars. In all honesty, I would like to know what is the plan to get my husband off that rock and back home?”

Wow.

It turns out silence was not a comforting answer.

****

**Sol 18 - Personal Diary of Mark Watney**

“So this is the personal log of Mark Watney on Sol 18. Yeah ... that’s right ... I am not dead. SURPRISE.”

Mark couldn’t help adding the jazz hands because he was an asshole and he knew it would make Tony laugh.
Still, he was serious and he wanted to record a proper entry. “Okay, stupid stuff out of the way and now onto serious things. First of all, I do not blame the crew at all, they had every reason to believe I was dead. The satellite dish stabbed through my biomedical monitor.”

Mark took a second to let whoever read this message to absorb what he said. “And finally, Tony, I fucking love you and I will do everything to say fuck Mars and get back to you. If the worst should happen and I don’t make it, know this ... I did everything possible and I want you to live a good life.”

*****

Finding out Mark was alive was the easy part - the difficult part was getting him home. NASA had the best brains on the planet but even they were struggling with this problem. Tony watched the eggheads mill around trying to figure out all the problems Mark might be facing on that stupid red rock. Tony settled a few of the egghead arguments because he knew his husband and it was that simple.

“He will need the supply mission by Sol 192.”

Tony shook his head, “It would be great but he won’t.”

One egghead rolled his eyes, “He cannot avoid starvation, no matter how good an astronaut he is.”

It was Tony’s turn to be sarcastic, “He is a botanist with potatoes ... He will figure it out.”

The scientist frowned, “They would need water.”

Tony snorted, “Not only is Mark the ‘King of Botany’, he is an engineer capable of figuring out whatever problems Mars throws at him.”

The JPL lead engineer took a different view to the conversation, “We need to communicate with him.”
Mindy Park was the SatCon engineer who had found the first image of Mark still alive. “Well, he is on a trip somewhere and he kitted out the Rover in a heavy way ... He took some hydrazine into the HAB too.”

Teddy looked to his people, “So where is he going and what is he doing with the hydrazine?”

One of the chemists spoke up, “If he is brave enough to set fire to it then he can make water.”

Tony had seen one too many mad scientist experiments of Mark’s. “He will, I just hope he doesn’t get hurt in the process.”

*****

**SOL 31 - Mars**

“Tony, I can say, “*Fuck You Mars* as I have figured out how to grow potatoes on a dead planet ... The trouble is, now I have to make water. Well, I know the process but it involves lighting hydrogen on fire and I know how nervous NASA gets about fire.”

Mark looked at the camera and took a deep breath, “Wish me luck.”

*Sol 31 ... part deux*

Mark appeared again in front of the screen only this time looking a bit singed around the edges. “Well I did it and I did something stupid. I forgot about my breathing. No, that makes no sense, I mean I forgot to take into account the oxygen I exhale.”
He sat down gingerly, understandably on account of having blown himself up. “Still I am undeterred from my quest so I shall suit up this time.”

The second time around he succeeded in making water on a dead planet. “Come on! Anyone would brag about that achievement - and I’m pretty sure my eyebrows will grow back eventually”.

*****

Back on Earth, Tony was fighting his own battle. The Press.

“So how do you feel knowing your husband is alive?” Asked the one inconsiderate asshole.

Tony knew how to charm people, “Annoyed! I mean can you imagine the next present I buy him? How do I top Mars?”

He saw Annie smile which made him think he was doing a good job. He picked the next person ... This was going to be a long briefing.

*****

Sol 48 - Diary of Mark Watney

“So Darling, I’ve decided it is time we communicate. If my math is right then it will be close to our anniversary. So I’ve decided to trick out the Rover and take it to find Pathfinder.”

He paused in his speech, knowing it was ambitious. “Look I know it might sound crazy. Pathfinder crashed in ’97 but it’s my only chance to have email sex with my husband so I will take it.”

He smirked, “I may be cold but that doesn’t mean my mind is dead and have you seen the ass on Tony? I would write sonnets to it but that’s not one of my skills. Tony is the creative one out of the two of us. Me. I’m the engineer ... See you in a few.”
Tony had waited until he had some downtime but when your job was dealing with the Press it didn’t keep predictable hours. He got home tired and cranky. The good thing was he was now willing to go home. It hadn’t been a fun place to be whilst he thought Mark was dead because everything there was a reminder of him.

Working with NASA was an excellent distraction. His phone rang, “Hey Gibbs ... What’s up?”

“Why can’t the Feebs shoot worth a damn?” The frustration was evident in his old friend’s voice.

Tony chuckled, “Well, they’re not all ex-snipers like you. You will have to adjust your expectations.”

Gibbs huffed, “Our team could shoot!”

Tony smiled, “Yeah but Viv was a bitch, Kate was Ex-Secret Service and you trained me.”

Gibbs sighed, “Are you bored playing with the Press yet? You could come and help me.”

Tony snorted, “Yeah maybe but not until Mark is safe.”

“A new mission?”

Tony was alone in his living room looking at a photo taken on the day they’d exchanged vows. “It is my only one.”

Gibbs’ voice was softer, “And that is all that matters. You get a second chance and I know you
won’t give up on that.”

****

**Sol 68 - First Contact.**

Mark couldn’t quite believe his crazy plan had worked. “Beth Johansen, you are an awesome nerd. Thanks to you I can have complex conversations with NASA. Oh, and talk to Tony so life is feeling pretty good despite being the only person in fifty million miles.”

He panned the camera around the HAB to show the little farm he’d grown. “I forgot, I have potatoes!”

You should never be that happy over the thought of potatoes but these were exceptional circumstances. He looked so happy at the little green shoots in a sea of dirt but the feat of ingenuity was huge. He’d grown a crop that would help him survive on a dead planet so he deserved all the plaudits.

****

The day they made contact was a day of celebration. The NASA team allowed themselves a moment to celebrate. This was a miracle. They all knew space was a giant uncertainty and the cruelest mistress you could ever have.

The first message made Tony cry, he was man enough to admit it.

MW

*I’m alive as you must have guessed. I am not sure how but please tell me you have a plan to rescue my sorry ass.*
Vincent was sitting on a chair feeling such a surge of relief he wasn’t sure how he would be able to contain himself.

VK

That’s good to hear. How are you doing? You should know that we are getting a supply mission together to keep you fed until Ares IV. Tony is giving Teddy hell and having congress eating out of the palms of his hands.

MW

Tony is working for NASA? I am not sure how I feel about this. I will never get away with anything ever again.

Back in SatCon, where the message was being shown across the board, he had to chuckle. It was true. Annie already wanted to give him a bonus. It was a simple thing. He had gone to Congress instead of her on the grounds that she hated every one of them. He had come back with a solution to the current funding crisis and a National cause for the people to rally around so even the White House adored him.

***

Sol 121- Diary of Mark Watney

“So now I can get emails from NASA, the botanists just won’t shut up. They keep telling me how to manage my crops. I mean ... come on, I am the one who grew my crops on a dead planet. I think I am ahead of the curve, right?”

To emphasise his point, he flashed the camera over his blooming crops. They may be potatoes and when he got off this god forsaken planet he might not eat a potato based product for a long while. He wouldn’t say forever because he couldn’t see himself never eating another french fry again.

“The other good thing though are the personal emails. Commander Lewis keeps trying to convince me her music is normal but I don’t believe it. I can’t ever listen to another Disco track ever again.”

He played the one file which was the familiar tune of Hot Stuff. “I mean I am sad for the commander but I can finally talk to my husband. It is too bad it is freezing up here or I would have done something with that one picture. I mean damn, way to tease a guy from fifty million miles away. It is an incentive to return home so there is that too.”
Mark wasn’t done but it was time to eat his potato for the morning. “Oh and I have been ordered to take a photo. I considered multiple poses but none of them would work with a space suit. I am not sure what I will do yet but I know inspiration will strike soon.”

***

Tony was trying not to laugh. It was a good feeling and one action he’d not undertaken in quite a while. Still, as he looked at the satellite image he couldn’t do anything but laugh. It was a bad idea to laugh as it was sending his bosses stress levels through the roof.

As she ranted to everyone stuck in the meeting, the others one by one saw the image and laughed too.

“What the hell! I ask for a photo and he gives me the Fonz... I can’t post that.”

Tony wasn’t so sure. Teddy Sanders seemed to know how to calm Annie the best. Their boss just put his hands out in a placating manner, “Look we will post it when we have a plan.”

Tony interrupted, “Do we have a plan?”

Vincent was the only one brave enough to answer him, “There are two plans and both are full of risks.”

****

**Sol - 178**

Mark was not naive. He knew that Mars was a cold and unforgiving taskmaster. His situation highlighted just how much of a bastard it could be. He might be living off a poop potato diet and using seventies disco music for entertainment but he was doing okay.

He should have known better…..
Mark stepped into the HAB having done the maintenance work for the day. He was going through the pressurisation chamber to give him breathable air without a space-suit. It was a routine fine-tuned down to a fine art with the amount of practice he had.

The alarm sounding the minute he pressed the sequence let him know he was in trouble. The problem was he powerless to stop it once he heard the lock click.

The alarm warning quickly turned to a boom. He was thrown in the air like a rag doll bouncing around the small tunnel like it was a tin can. He blacked out when he slammed his head against the wall.

It was so quick he never even got a chance to think any last thoughts.

1/2 a SOL later, an emergency oxygen warning woke him up. It was what would save Mark’s life. Well, he hoped it would. He reached to his waistbelt for the breach kit (Giant extra strong adhesive duct tape). It was a cure for most ills, including massive cracks in your space suit.

Mark knew things were not good. He had to go and assess the damage and see what he could salvage of the HAB but first he needed to take care of himself. If he didn’t then the HAB was a moot point because he would be dead.

He looked in the dark and oxygenless HAB, his heart plummeted seeing the potato crops destroyed. The leaves withered away in the sub zero, poor oxygen atmosphere. He had to ignore it for now so he grabbed the good space suit and took refuge in the Rover vehicle.

Once he sat down, he activated the Rover camera to vent, “Well the HAB just blew up which is just perfect. So that speeds up plans and I better hope the tarp and magic duct tape can fill the hole left by the HAB entrance.”

You could tell just by looking at his face that he was thinking about the problems he now had. Already his brain was whirling with potential solutions. “So I say this with great joy in my heart. It is time to move out and see what’s at the Schiaparelli Crater for me.”

Mark was disappointed over the lost crop but he had already harvested many many potatoes so whilst a setback it wouldn’t kill him in the next few days. It was always about priorities. If the stunt
meant you were dead in days then it was stupid and dangerous. If the stunt kept you alive but may kill you in 50 sol days then you start to worry about it around Sol 48.

*****

Annie and Tony were called to a special meeting by Teddy which was never a good thing. Annie looked straight at her Deputy, “Have either of us done anything outrageous?”

Tony shrugged, “Not to my knowledge.”

Annie sighed pinching her nose, “This is going to give me a fucking headache. I just know it.”

Tony had in the last few month come to admire his new boss. His favourite thing was the way she could be rude and cuss out people and still keep her job. He was terrified of introducing her to Gibbs. If she was a redhead they probably would have already been married.

They reached the meeting with the shouting already reaching new heights. Tony didn’t care about hurt feelings or power bases. He figured if they were going to act like school children then he would treat them that way and besides, if Annie and he didn’t know what the problem was then they couldn’t fix it.

Tony put his fingers in his mouth and whistled loudly. The noise stopped that very second and they all looked sheepishly at the new arrivals.

Mitch, who was Director of Flight Control was growling, “The crew could get there in time to rescue him.”

Tony eyes narrowed, “So what is the problem Director?”

Sanders didn’t cow down, he believed he was right. “The math means the Ares crew would be in space over 900 days.”
Tony pinched his nose, “So you are going to sacrifice my husband without even asking the crew if they would want to go?

“It’s too risky.”

Tony slammed his hands on the desk, “You may be right but you stand here, on Earth, where Mark isn’t and you are implying he never will be because of whatever reason you want to cook up.”

Teddy got in his face, “You are thinking as his husband, not as my Deputy Media Relation Director.”

Tony knew the smirk on his face wasn’t the wisest choice. He wasn’t naive and ultimately Teddy had the power to decide his husband’s fate. “You’re wrong, if the Ares team are willing then they deserve the chance to try. Space is a bitch and Mark is running out of spare lives. Mars will kill him before Ares IV starts. Plus, you know that someone will get the message to them and when the crew decides to do it anyway ... then we will have a mutiny to deal with.”

Sander stood toe to toe, “Are you threatening me?”

Tony didn’t blink as he had stared down terrorists and crazy murderers. “Nope, I am stating the logical facts knowing the team in here, and on Ares and their personal investment. You’re goddamn right I want my husband back but it boils down to this, you do not ever leave a man behind.”

Mitch, the flight director stood up, “Agreed.”

Vincent chuckled, “If you don’t let them go then Teddy you get to tell Melissa Lewis that she had the chance but wasn’t allowed to rescue one of her men.”

Teddy mentally winced at just that thought. The mission may be called Ares but Teddy always thought the mission commander embodied Athena. The arguments were just and sound and argued from several points of view. The simple fact of the matter was that he was accountable and the choice would be a difficult one to justify. He couldn’t order the crew to do it but he could let the Ares team decide for themselves.

*****
“So NASA rocket scientists have a plan. It’s crazy. I am not judging as I am hanging on by a thread but it’s completely nuts! They want me to take the MAV, remove all the safety features - Oh, that includes propulsion control and shoot myself into SPACE with a tarp over the nose cone.”

Mark looked at the camera. He may be driving the Rover but it was a risk free glance. After all, at his current location it was just red dust and not a crater, mountain or even a rock in sight. Risk free driving but also very boring. He figured the video logs would be the best way to liven things up.

“Now they keep emphasising that I will be the fastest man in Space like it will help detract from the lunacy of the plan. I am going to use myself as a human cannonball and be caught in space by the Hermes.” Mark actually smiled at the camera,

“They played a dirty trick. They played the husband card and you know what Tony did. He threatened to never sleep with me again unless I let myself get rescued.”

The camera picked up his dopey expression. When you looked at Mark, you could see the tiredness, you could see the weariness seeping into his bones but it all changed when he spoke of Tony.

****

Tony was standing in Mission Control barely able to stay in his own skin. After so many struggles, heartaches and more up and down rollercoaster with his emotions, today was the day where the Ares crew were going to attempt to rescue Mark.

He knew the chances of success were slim but he had to hold onto hope. Tony knew the Eggheads couldn’t factor in Mark’s sheer stubborn will to survive.

Just like with everything else in the mission, the rescue was not without peril. They weren’t done screwing with his emotions either as the crew had to turn Mark into a human cannonball with Lewis waiting in position to catch him. Mark blacked out with the G’s he pulled and Tony was sure he held his breath for the entire time Lewis was calling out his husband’s name.
Then…. finally…….The sound of Mark’s voice was the sweetest thing he’d ever heard.

Thank god for sheer dumb luck - *it worked*.

Teddy got to smile today, it was a good day. He looked at DiNozzo and had to embrace him. He wanted to give the man a minute to compose himself. “In ten months, Mark will be splashing down in the Indian Ocean and you will be there to greet him.”

Tony couldn’t quite speak yet as there were so many emotions charging through him. He did manage to whisper, “Thank you.”

****

As promised, Tony was right there when the module touched down on Earth. There was no way he wouldn’t be but even Annie was on his side. He knew Mark was just on the other side of the door and he couldn’t believe the ordeal was over.

Oh, he knew there would be more tribulations to come as NASA had spent a shit ton of money to bring Mark back home and so would basically own him. Although they couldn’t have his ass, that was Tony’s.

The door opened and Tony couldn’t remember ever seeing a better sight. He didn’t care about all the camera clicks around him, or voices clamouring for an answer to their questions. They could suck it as far as Tony was concerned. He found himself moving forward without conscious thought towards the Mark.

Mark’s smile upon seeing him was brighter than the sun. Tony found himself giddy and tearful as he closed the gap between them unable to bear the last few meters apart. He clung to Mark, peppering his face with kisses, earning laughs from the crew and Mark. Tony didn’t care.
He knew how weak Mark still was and was careful to not harm him by being too enthusiastic. He had his husband back on solid Earth and now he was never letting him go. For a few days, Tony doubted whether he would even be able to let Mark leave his sight.

“You are never going anywhere without me again!” Tony declared imperiously.

Mark smirked, “Babe, I colonised Mars, became a human cannonball and was a Space Pirate. I think I can settle down now.”

Tony laughed at such a typical comment from Mark. He’d always used humour to deflect a heavy conversation as well. “When we are free ... I am rocking your world.”

Mark moved to put an arm around Tony. It served two purposes. Firstly it kept him in close human contact and who better to enjoy that with than your husband. The second purpose was that he still felt pretty weak and had no intention on falling on his ass in front of the World’s Press.

“You already do.”

*The picture of Tony and Mark walking off arm in arm was the best-sellin picture in the History of the NASA shop. It partially helped to fund the Ares V mission.*
Tony wasn’t quite sure what was going on but the Feebs were adamant that he should come into the office. This operation he was going under for was vital and he needed to be at his best. It was high risk but Tony didn’t care as it would get him away from the three deranged amigos. He knew his time was up at NCIS but he was using this joint operation as a way to exit the agency with grace.

Tony couldn’t believe how McGee, David and Abby liked to rewrite history. On top of that he could see Jenny was trying to set him up for something stupid and risky. Her moves were coming straight out of *Psych 101*. The Director had isolated her target (Tony), then shown affection and concern. This was all to get him to agree to some action or give over some information. Tony could be honest and say that he had done it himself on more than one occasion in the past.

Fornell was sitting opposite him. “You know you don’t have to do this.”

Tony smirked. “I am doing it for me. If I let them keep chipping away at me then I will forget who I am in the end.”

It was then that the newcomer walked in. “Cal Lightman. So let’s get this show on the road.”

Tony could see Tobias frown, not liking the interruption. Tony viewed it with different eyes. Tony could guess this was the Feebs final test to see if he was ready for the operation.
The man was intelligent and Tony could see the mischief in his eyes. This Lightman character made a living at judging people by their expressions and Tony did something similar when undercover. It was as the old saying goes, *like recognises like.*

Tony took the newbie’s attention off Fornell. “Can we help you?”

“So who am I judging?”

Tony snickered. “I think that would be me but I wasn’t informed there would be a pop-quiz.”

Lightman looked at him. “Now you are going to be fun.”

Tony smile turned from smug to flirtatious in a second. “I can be a lot of fun”

Tobias rolled his eyes. “I think now’s the time for me to make my retreat.”

Tony rolled his eyes. “I heard what you said Tobias. I want to do this for myself and then I will sign whatever contract you want.”

****

After Fornell left it was just the two of them in the room and whoever wanted to observe from the other side. This was going to be a doozy so Tony had no doubt there would be more than a few voyeurs.

“So Dr. Lightman, what will we discuss first?”

The visitors head angled to the side as if he was contemplating a great mystery. “You know about me?”
Tony slouched in his chair, projecting an aura of surety. “In my line of work, it pays to keep up with the literature about how to lie better.”

Cal chuckled as he found himself liking the man in front of him. He had spent so long studying people’s expressions that he forgot the people in the equation. His friend, Gillian, told him it was a serious fault and the ex-wife would agree with her. No, not this guy, the Agent did everything to make you focus on him but only the way he wanted you to.

Take for example just how he was sitting on his chair. The Agent was model worthy attractive so he slouched on the chair so you appreciated his body. Oh, yeah he was good. The time Cal spent ogling the body meant DiNozzo had some time to get his body and thoughts under control and as a result, Cal had lost the element of surprise but he could adapt.

Lightman smirked. “Well played.”

Tony nodded his head, so much of people’s interactions were non-verbal. “Thank you. So who am I today, Tony or Martin?”

Cal could admit to a certain amount of fascination with the Agent in front of him. Cal had to ask. “Are Tony and Martin two people?”

Tony shrugged not quite sure how he could explain it. He did the best he could, knowing what was at stake. “Tony is a Federal Agent about to transfer to the FBI. Martin is a high-level escort about to be making a play for the Mob Boss of Washington.”

Cal liked the bold way he threw out the fact so he wasn’t ashamed by the idea. Good that would be his first tell in the job. “So being a gay lover is no issue?”

Tony leaned forward. “I will be whoever I need you me to be.” He said it with just the right nuance to be seductive rather than a cliche.

Cal smirked. “So you sell the dream but how will that get him interested?”

Tony smirked right back and seriously, no Federal Agent had the right to be that attractive. Now, Cal
was glad that none of his team were here or they would be enjoying this way too much.

DiNozzo rolled his eyes as he all but purred. “Oh, I am not for sale right now. I am going to be skittish as I have just had a bad encounter.”

“Oh?” Lightman could play along as this was the most entertained he’d been in years.

Tony nodded and he looked confident in his own skin. The movements of his limbs were just a little more fluid when he spoke in character.

“I may be a hooker but I have limits and one of his friends is going to have a bad date with me.”

“How will it end?” Lightman would never admit but he was spellbound because the guy was that good. He was a master of micro-expressions but Tony wasn’t giving him a hint. Cal found himself hoping the operation was short as he wanted to get to know the Agent better. For most people, the idea of a partner being able to lie to them was a turn-off but for Cal it was a turn-on.

Tony leaned further forward, whispering in Cal's ear. Cal wouldn't deny that he found himself shivering at Tony's breath on his skin. Tony answered him. “With the Mob boss wanting to make amends so his interests stay safe.”

Cal Lightman was known to be abrasive and difficult to work with but today he was perfectly polite. “I have no doubt you will get your man and I hope it is a short operation for all involved.”

“What? Why?” Tony found himself not wanting their little conversation to be over.

“Well I can’t date you whilst you are dating a mob boss as Martin, can I?”

Tony’s smile was handsome but that was the false smile, this one was a supernova. “I would like that and I will come to you when it’s safe.”

*****

Six months later, Tony found himself striding through the doors of the Lightman Group. He was free and clear and installed as the Lead Agent for the Washington DC office. He’d gotten the Mob boss and it turned out he didn’t have to sleep with the idiot which was a bonus. Spinelli may have had
money but what he made up in money he lacked in class.

He strolled up to the office receptionist. “I need to make an appointment with Dr. Foster.”

The receptionist smiled seeing the new visitor. “Er, How can we help you at the Lightman Group today?”

Tony took in a deep breath as he could have sworn he’d just said why. “I need to speak to Dr. Foster regarding the contract with the FBI.”

Woops.

Silence.

Now he had got their attention and he saw Cal hover in his doorway. It was the first time they’d seen each other since their interview but Tony could see the mischief in his eyes. Lightman was pouting, no doubt because Tony was speaking to Gillian first and not him.

Dr. Gillian Foster was the long time best friend of Dr. Lightman. “How may I help you, Agent ...”

Tony shook her hand. “It's Special Agent in Charge Anthony DiNozzo and it's a pleasure. What I need to do today is renegotiate the contract with the FBI.”

Gillian frowned because as far as she was aware there were no scandals between Cal and the FBI recently. “Let’s come into my office and we can discuss the reasons why.”

Tony was all suave charm and Gillian could hear the receptionist swoon in her chair. Tony decided to reassure her. “Oh, make no mistake - I don’t doubt your uses as an Agency, it’s just there is a conflict of interest brewing.”

Gillian prided herself on knowing where trouble is brewing before it occurs. This time, it did not happen. “Oh, I see.”
Cal walked up and slid closer to Tony, “This is Tony and he is an FBI agent and you know what? He can lie to me.” Gillian snickered now understanding the fascination for her best friend. She knew this was one courtship that would be fun to watch unfold. All she could say is. “Not what you usually look for in a partner but I can see how that might be useful.”

Tony shrugged, “You wouldn’t even believe our first meeting.”

“Well I wish you happiness and I’ll save you some time. I will make sure that I handle the FBI cases personally.”

Tony bowed. “Thank you. So what time should I pick you up?”

Gillian rolled her eyes. “Why not go now? He will be unbearable because he is too excited.”

***

The next year the graduating class of young agents had one memorable class. There was a guest lecture by Dr. Cal Lightman and SAC Anthony DiNozzo. The lecture was fascinating and scary especially when Dr. Lightman threw a cup at the wall. There was a reason for him doing it -There was a question about fake surprise versus real surprises.

Tony rolled his eyes at the antics. “Don’t look surprised, if it lasts longer than a second it’s fake.”

The point was made and also the response on the senior agent’s part showed great restraint and experience. There was no over-reaction but Tony being Tony had to add a sarcastic. “What was I supposed to pull my gun?”

The new agents listened in amazement as the pair argued their way through the lecture.

What had made their eyes pop out was what happened at the end of the lecture. Once it ended, the couple left hand in hand with matching gold bands on their ring fingers.
Jack Ryan was angry at the world until Tony offers him a different perspective.

This chapter is for VelvetKyra who suggested the pairing. In my head, I envisaged and played off the canon established in Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit, where Jack is played by Chris Pine because it was a pretty picture.

Big thanks goes to Edronhia for the amazing beta work :D

Let’s not Talk about it (Jack Ryan) - VelvetKyra

Jack Ryan was angry at the world and he felt he had the right to be. He had put his doctorate on hold to serve his country and ended up unable to walk. He didn’t regret his decision as it had saved the lives of his men but rehabilitation sucked. They told him he would never walk again and right now, as much as he wanted to disagree, he thought they might be right.

It was late in the evening and he was doing his rehab exercises. Jack was of the opinion that he should have arms like a linebacker for all the weight they were holding up. As he landed on his ass yet again, he figured that it was probably because he didn’t have those muscles that he kept ending up on the floor.

A voice on the sofa spoke up. “Get up.”

Jack snarked right back. “Did you miss the cripple part?” He had to add, bitterness colouring his voice.

“No. I saw a gorgeous guy down on his luck about to give up.” The voice replied to him.

Jack had always been bisexual, he’d given up on those thoughts when he joined the Marines. As it
was, he wouldn’t have to worry about it as this was a career ending injury. He spared a glance to at least see who the voice belonged to and *damn*, he wished he was less injured or he’d be all over that guy.

Any snark on Jack’s lips died as he saw the massive cast on the guy’s leg. “So what happened to you.”

The pity moment was over, he dragged himself to the sofa and started to chat to the newbie. Gorgeous newbie smiled. “Well you know how it is, one minute you are the starting quarterback at O.S.U and then Brad Pitt breaks your leg. So you are not the only one who has to refigure their lives, lieutenant.”

Jack rolled his eyes. “How did you figure I was a Marine?”

There was a boyish grin that would get a *lot* of people in trouble. “Well, now I can’t play ball ... I have to figure out a new job. I could be a cop, or I could be a physical therapist I haven’t decided.”

Jack huffed. “Well let’s get fit first and then we can decide.”

Hot guy tilted his head to the side. “Do I hear a pact there?”

Jack figured he had nothing to lose and why not? He wanted to walk again and he wanted to see cute guy smile again. “Sure. Do I get a name, or, am I to keep calling you hot guy in my head?”

Tony hoisted himself up on his two crutches, “Sure you get a name when you take your first step.”

“That is teasing.”

Tony grinned. “No, it is called an incentive and besides when I can do the same I will ask for your name.”

Jack rolled his eyes and his brain was going like a whirlwind. “What are you calling me until then?”

“Perfect male specimen,” was the deadpan response.
And okay Jack had no good reply to that, he was working on not blushing.  *Hot Guy* did do one thing for him. He gave him the metaphorical kick he needed, he was not the type to give up and failure was not an option for Ryan’s. He could do this.

A new voice entered the fray. “He gives advice you know.”

Jack rolled his eyes because this guy was not nearly as cute. “And what can I do for the CIA this evening?”

Tom Harper could kiss the guy who had just left. He’d listened to the flirtation but more importantly, he’d seen the fire return to Ryan. He could work with that opening. “You know John, you can still serve your country.”

“How?” You could see the distrust and his eyes roving to calculate his options. Tom admired that level of natural paranoia as it was the type that could see him survive. “Oh, and John was my father, it’s why I like Jack.”

Tom would leave him keen tonight. “Go back to school and settle down. We’ll be in touch.”

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A week later, they were doing rehab work and Jack had to crow in glory. He took his first step, his trainer chuckled at the enthusiasm. “You are going to hurt so be careful.”

“Don’t care, now I get to know hot guy’s name.” Jack realised in that moment it mattered more than even he realised.

The therapist didn’t understand. “If you say so.”

Jack knew how it sounded but he wanted to know more. “You don’t understand Doc. He is gorgeous and seems interested in my sorry ass.”

That did get Jack a chuckle. “Well if he is as cute as you ... then you deserve each other. You would both be too pretty for mere mortals.”

Tony was actually doing his work on the other side of the room. He was pleased to see his *perfect male specimen* make progress. He hobbled across and interrupted. “Thanks doc and it’s Anthony
DiNozzo but call me Tony.”

Jack smiled, “I’m John Ryan but for god’s sake call me Jack.”

Tony smirked. “Well, I won’t interrupt the progress. You need to be walking to take me on a date somewhere that isn’t here.”

He walked away and Tony even managed to make the crappy hospital sweats look good. Jack figured forget Cop or Physical Therapist - He’d make more money as a model. His own therapist interrupted his thoughts.

“You know I like him, cute and sassy but I was right. You two are way to pretty to date anyone else.”

Jack had to focus on his mission, okay the mission was walking but it was a vital one. “Well, you heard him… I have goals.”

The rehabilitation staff watched the two beautiful men crash together. The therapists encouraged them as they pushed each other. The usual depression seen in patients as they had setbacks never appeared as they wouldn’t let it.

When Jack was walking he pushed Tony to settle on a new goal. One that he could work towards now the idea of going Pro was over.

“I want to help people,” Tony confessed.

Jack had grabbed Tony and pulled him into a hug on the bed. “Okay. It is a worthy goal. How?”

Tony wasn’t sure. “Well, I am nearly finished with my Physical Ed degree.”

Jack whistled. “Now that is not an easy course. Do you know that many of the courses are the same as Pre-Med? You could work towards getting your Doctorate. I can’t think of anything nobler ... Just imagine how they would deal with stubborn Marines.”
Tony laughed but twisted in Jack’s arms. "I don’t want to date just any Marine. I only want to date you.”

Jack may have hugged him tight for a second. “Good and I feel the same so let’s get out of here and go be different types of doctors.”

Tony huffed. “Just like that?”

Jack grinned and unleashed his own devastating charm on his partner. “Well, I always say when there is the will, there is always a way. We’ll find the scholarships and we’ll figure it out.”

Tony kissed him because that kind of unshakable faith was something he’d never had in his life. “You make me believe.”

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Later that evening Commander Tom Harper walked back into his life. “I see you’ve worked on the settling down part of your life.”

Jack rolled his eyes and asked the most pertinent question. The CIA may know about his love life which was creepy but that was not why they were there. “So what do you want me to do for the CIA?”

“Go work for Wall Street.”

Jack was a smart man but he could honestly say that was not what he was expecting. “You want me to do what, launder money? Earn a lot of money?”

Tom chuckled. “You’re a funny guy Jack, don’t lose that. No, we want you to check for patterns. War, as it is fought now, is becoming a thing of the past Jack. It is moving into the financial and cyber wars.”

Jack rolled his eyes because he’d written a paper to that effect just before the September attack so now he knew how he’d come on the radar of the CIA. “Well, then Tony and I will need the money to fund our studies.”

Tom smirked. “Check your email ... I should imagine there will be a few scholarship emails coming
Ten years passed in a blur and the two men had done as they promised and forged their new lives together. Jack was officially Dr. John Ryan, having gained his doctorate in Economics and newly installed as Vice President of European operations. Tony was now Dr. Anthony DiNozzo, his hard work gaining him the reputation as a rising star in Rehabilitation Medicine. No one gave them crap about being gay mainly because they both could fight and shoot. Tony hadn’t known how to shoot but indulged Jack’s worries which was a good thing. Jack hadn’t quite figured out how to explain he was working for the CIA and should anyone come after Tony, Jack would prefer it if he could fight.

“So are you ready to be bored by my side?” Jack asked.

Tony was still in his Doctor’s coat not wanting to change as it had been too much effort at the end of his shift. “Was that in the vows I made?”

“Somewhere, in sickness and in health. You know the bit where it said you must keep your husband from boredom at dull parties.”

Tony huffed. “You are lucky I love you.”

Jack grinned. “Oh, I am grateful hot guy every damn day.”

Tony was a whizz at these parties because he was brought up on this shit. He’d summereed with his mother’s family the Paddington’s in England and his Dad used parties as a giant con so he was well versed in how to behave at parties.

Tony picked out a tux that he knew he looked good in and as a bonus, he knew Jack liked peeling him out of it at the end of the evening. Jack looked at him in the tux and pouted.

“Why are we going to the stupid party?”

Tony snickered. “It is for you darling to celebrate your promotion to VP.”
Jack pulled him closer and teased. “Yeah, all it means is now I have an office.”

Tony grabbed his husband’s hand and pulled him towards the door. “Yeah, and just think we can have office sex in there just as soon as our schedules clear.”

“Still a tease.”

Tony knew just what would keep Jack going through the party. “No, not a tease because I deliver on my promises.”

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Tony sighed because he read the name of the next patient. Stubborn bastard. Marines seemed to be his thing, he was the one who made the breakthroughs, only this guy had ended up as an NCIS agent not a wall street banker.

“So Leroy are we’re wallowing or self-loathing today?” Tony asked, knowing it would grab his attention.

“What would you know?” Gibbs growled.

Tony looked at him sharply. “I know my husband suffered a career ending injury breaking his back in the Marines. He saved his men and I will never be more proud of him than for that. I know I had to get over my ego when I broke my leg in the college championship stopping me from going pro. We all have our pains Agent Gibbs ... It’s how we react that sets us apart and your file doesn’t suggest you’re a quitter. Although I could be wrong.”

Gibbs stared at him - almost through him - but Tony was equal to the task. Gibbs chuckled. “Damn no one has spoken to me like that since my first wife.”

Tony snickered. “Well, then you need a better deputy find someone with a backbone but until then ... Let’s get you fit and whole. What do you say?”

The progress was slow but Tony didn’t let him slack off and made him keep up. He was shocked to find himself acting as the man’s psychiatrist too but Tony knew he wouldn’t see anyone else and he could still remember his early rotations.
Tony watched Jethro claw his way back from the shooting.

It had taken two months but Gibbs was ready to go back to his job. Tony was there to see him off. “It’s been a trip Gibbs.”

The man shook his hand. “You were great doc and I know I am not an easy patient.”

“Just do your best not to end up back in my care,” Tony responded.

Gibbs chuckled. “It’s not my fault it is the damn terrorists and I will work on finding a mouthy second.”

Tony laughed. “It would do you good.”

Gibbs smiled at him. “Too bad you are not an Agent you would have been great for the role.”

“Nah, can you imagine it?” Tony had once thought about it but he was glad to have gone the route he did. “Take care Agent Gibbs.”

Jack was stressing because he had no idea what he should do with the information. This was a little more than rooting out cyber-terrorists and the money launderers. God he wished he could tell Tony but Tom, his boss had forbade it. Jack had too many puzzle pieces and he needed to figure it out.

There was no point in delaying it so he phoned his shadowy-boss. The meet was set up. “So explain it to me and remember I don’t have a Ph.D.”

Jack explained the only scenario in his head that made sense even if it was terrifying. Tom sighed as if this was only a mere aggravation not a potential attack on their mainland.

Jack asked tartly. “So what should I do?”

“Tell your husband. His last patient was an agent well connected in anti-terrorism circles.”
Jack looked at him in confusion because his boss was telling him to tell the truth. The one rule he’d been told at the beginning was to tell no one so he could be forgiven for being confused. “You told me I couldn’t tell anyone I worked for the CIA.”

Harper smirked. “Well Jack, I said tell them what you found not why you found it.”

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It turns out that Tom Harper only got half of his wishes. Jack did as ordered and passed the information along. Tony hadn’t blinked, he’d used the contact details he had to set up a meeting with Gibbs.

No matter what Commander Tom Harper thought, Tony was not stupid. They’d fought, had a knock-down fight but the make-up sex was phenomenal.

All was good in Tony’s life even if his husband couldn’t decide if he was a banker or a spy. It was all cool, they were alive, happy and for everything else - they would adapt.
Tony had no idea what he was doing here. His Dad had asked him to check on a brother and it was news to Tony that he even had an Uncle. He had tried not to lose his temper. He valued family above all else, mainly because as a kid he had had so little of it.

He drove into small town Beacon Hills. It was so quiet compared to Washington and the other cities he was used to. He could like it here Tony thought. It was a stray thought. Crazy too. He was a Federal Agent and good at his job. He had no reason to want to give it all up. Well, no that wasn’t strictly true. He was in a funk and starting to wonder if his job was the cause.

The town was odd. The vibe from the town was just weird so Tony went to pick up a newspaper to find out what was going on. He also picked up the phone to call his Dad wanting a few more details.

“So this Uncle of mine, does he have a name?”

“Well, hello to you to Junior.”
Tony sighed because his Dad knew how much he hated being called that. Their relationship was slowly being patched up but it was at band-aid level of strength right now. It could easily blow. “Senior, I am tired, cranky and I need a name to start somewhere.”

“He took his wife’s name, Hale.”

Tony chuckled because that was cool. He could guess why his Dad and his brother had fallen out if that was the case. Senior was always about image. He ignored the rant about to start. “What’s my Uncle’s first name?”

“Robert.”

Tony decided to end the call before his headache could start. “Thanks, I’ll be in touch.”

Tony had a name, and he had his hands on a newspaper. He figured the best thing he could do was find the Diner, grab some food and do some reading. He had a name at least, Robert Hale. The trouble was his Dad had not spoken to his brother in twenty years and a lot could happen in twenty years.

The conversation between two kids on the next row shed light on the situation.

“He is a serial killer I am telling you!” The dark haired boy insisted.

The other one rolled his eyes, “You don’t really believe Hale is a killer ... A creep, maybe but not a killer.”

The young teen was not be swayed and Tony was using his skills to avoid notice.

The teen with the buzz cut was trying to persuade his stubborn friend. “Come on, Derek lost most of his family in that fire. Cut him a break.”

Tony didn’t drop his mug but it was a close thing. Hale fire, it couldn’t be! Could it? Tony needed more answers and listening to teenagers gossip was not likely to lead to the truth. What he did think was that he could maybe get some directions.
“Hey, excuse me. Can you point me towards the Sheriff’s office?”

Buzz-cut narrowed his eyes. “Why?”

Tony wasn’t taken aback because it was a protective question, not a rude one. “Because I need to talk to the Sheriff, I work for NCIS.”

The brunette wrinkled his nose. “Never heard of it.”

The other boy did know. “It’s the Navy cops.”

Tony nodded his head. “That’s right. I’m impressed.”

Stiles shrugged like it wasn’t a big deal. “It was a research binge.”

Tony didn’t say anything. “It’s all cool, I’m just relieved I don’t have to explain my job.”

Stiles flashed him a quick smile, Tony was guessing the kid didn’t get a lot of easy acceptance. The boy was quick to recover and shrug it off. “Anyway let’s go take you to see Pops.”

The brunette frowned. “I thought we had that other thing to do Stiles.”

“Don’t be rude Scotty and besides, it won’t take long to take this guy down to see Pops.”

The friend scowled and stormed away - Stiles sighed. “Sorry about that ... He’s a bit high strung this week.”

Tony wasn’t quite sure what to say. “Err I think I should be saying that to you. Sorry if you had plans.”
“It’s cool - my Dad is the Sheriff so it’s like I’m performing my civic duties.” he smirked.

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Tony walked into the Sheriff’s office and there was nothing to distinguish it from the other hundred he’d seen. Well, there may be one thing, the hello salty goodness kind. The Sheriff was hot and looked like he could handle himself so there were two of Tony’s biggest kinks right there.

“Hey Pops. This Agent would like to talk to you.”

The Sheriff gave his son a fond but exasperated sigh. “Does the Agent have a name, Stiles?”

Stiles looked sheepish. “I’m not too sure, I was trying to convince Scotty that although Derek may have murder eyebrows that doesn’t make him a killer.”

“I appreciate you remembering a little thing like evidence,” John added in a dry voice.

Tony chuckled. “I’m not here in a professional capacity, I am looking for some family history and I was hoping you could help me.”

“Step this way then,” the Sheriff said, pointing at his office. John had noticed his son’s ability to surround himself with beautiful people but they were always ridiculously young. John was pleased to see whilst a little younger, the Agent was closer to his age with a fantastic ass. The Agent also had good taste, seeing as he was wearing Armani jeans that emphasised that perfect ass to perfection.

Tony could hear the conversation on the way into the office that was going on between the Sheriff’s son and his Deputy.

“Was my Dad checking out the hot agent?”
Tony wanted to grin but it was hardly the right setting. The Sheriff was hot and due to his son’s comment it seemed Tony may be in with a chance. He may have come to town on what could be a wild goose chase but things were looking up.

The woman chuckled. “Oh yeah but it was not all one way.”

Tony wanted to make a comment like, “Did they think he was blind?” The Sheriff was hot and he had to be, not many people could make the Sheriff uniforms attractive. Well, Tony had always thought that until he met Sheriff Stilinski.

“Sweet.”

Tony knew then that if this was going to go anywhere then he at least appeared to have the son’s approval. He was not sure what he’d done to deserve such confidence but Tony wasn’t someone to look a gift horse in the mouth.

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Tony sat down on the chair offered. “I was asked to research an Uncle for my father. Sadly, the old man is not too good with details.” Tony’s face managed to convey his frustrations. “All I got was he was my father’s brother, Robert and he took his wife’s name, Hale.”

The sheriff stiffened because he knew that family. “Yeah son, I know who you are talking about. I’m sorry to tell you there was a family fire a few years back and nearly everyone died ... In fact, now there is just Derek and Peter left from the Hales.”

Tony was sorry to hear it, he would always hate fires. “Thank you for telling me.”

John Stilinski was a good man who had a good feeling about the agent in front of him. He looked at Tony consideringly. “The son is in town and he could do with a non-judgemental ear if you can stick around for a bit.”

Tony stood up. “I have a week before I have to report back to Washington so I guess I’ll be hanging around ‘till then.”

As John shook his hand he was caught unaware by a question from the younger man. “Your shift is
over at eight, right?"

John wasn’t following. “Yeah ... Why?”

Tony shrugged but decided to be blunt considering how attracted he was to the Sheriff. “I find you interesting and would love to get to know you better. Besides, I hate to eat alone.”

There was a crash outside the office and Tony knew Stiles was eavesdropping. Tony whispered sotto voce. “I mean every word, I figure you’re a good guy and if you weren’t interested you would say so, in which case we just have a friendly meal together. So Eight O’Clock?”

John nodded as he wasn’t sure what was going on but knew he would regret it if he didn’t agree. There hadn’t been anyone since Claudia died that had even created a spark of interest in him.

John spluttered. “You are too damn attractive for me but I’d be a fool to say no.”

Tony’s natural confidence came to the fore and he was going to make a graceful exit before the Sheriff talked himself out of what they both wanted. “Yeah you would be so I am going to find somewhere for our date.”

The boy crashed through the door. “I can help with that.”

Tony chuckled. “Won’t your friend be upset with you?”

Stiles shrugged, “Meh, it’s cool. This is my Pops and he is more important.”

John pointed at his son. “Don’t break him.”

Stiles had his patent shit-eating grin. “I am going to leave that up to you Pops.” Sensing now was a good time to split, he grabbed Tony’s arm and dragged him out of the office.

Tony left the office pleased with himself, he was sorry to hear about the extended family but the news was still abstract in many ways. It sounded harsh but he had never known the family and if there was one thing Tony had learnt in his years on the Force/in the Agency is you can’t change the past. You can only move forward so he would meet his cousin and uncle. He would do what he
Tony phoned the only person in DC that knew of his true orientation. “Hello my dark goddess.”

“Tony!” Abby screamed down the phone.

Tony smiled just from the joy down the phone. “It’s good to talk to you too.”

“What’s up?”

Tony sucked in a breath and figured if he was too nervous to say, then he had no right going on the date. “I have a date with the local Sheriff.”

Abby snorted. “Weren’t you wanting to escape the toxic bitch and track down missing family?”

Tony had to smile at her nickname for Ziva because try as Gibbs did, Abby would never welcome the person who helped contribute to Kate’s death. “Well, I multitasked and did both but it wasn’t a great story.”

“Oh, I am sorry. I hoped you could find better family to connect with.”

Tony smiled because Abby always had a far bigger heart than her body. “Hey, I have my little sister. Who else do I need?”

Abby never played fair and she had wanted Tony to settle down and find someone who loved him. “Someone to love and hold - You know that is what you need.”
Tony smiled. “I’m working on it.”

“I want details on all parts of this trip,” Abby demanded. “Stop talking to me and go get ready for your date, go for drop dead gorgeous like only you can.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

Tony looked at the clothes he’d packed for his little trip. He had had his black ass hugging jeans, and a black dress shirt. Yeah. He could make that work without looking like he was trying too hard. Tony didn’t want to explain to himself why this first date mattered so much but it did.

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Tony had found a cute restaurant online, based off recommendations and reviews. It was apparently a good Italian place. Tony could probably cook the food himself but he was a little lacking in a kitchen with his apartment back in Virginia. He’d text John the place having grabbed his number from the man’s son.

He waited outside the place, wanting to enjoy the warm night air. There was something about this place that set his ‘gut’ off but he didn’t care.

“You are just a little too good looking to be hanging out around here.”

Tony whirled around with a massive smile on his face. “I’m here for you so let’s go inside.”

The inside was perfect, it wasn’t too fancy or too cliched. It was homey and you could get lost there. Tony ordered the food in Italian, it was nice to use his linguistic skills in a way that wouldn’t be judged. The owners, a pair of aging Italians, were delighted with the handsome young man and told the Sheriff to look after him.

John had to smile at the adorable blush. “There is nothing to blush about.”

Tony smile was sheepish as he tried to explain. “It’s been awhile since anyone has called me cute
“and adorable.”

John frowned. “I thought you worked with hotshot investigators?”

Tony snorted. “They like to think so but in reality, I am the investigator on the team.” He didn’t want to let the toxic duo spoil his evening, it was like Abby said, he should have fun.

John shook his head. “They may not be investigators but they can’t be blind.”

Tony laughed and softened, “You are a flatterer alright.”

John took his hand, “No I speak the truth, now we better tuck in because Maria keeps glaring at me.”

Tony twirled his food around his fork and savoured the beautiful cooking. It was a good evening already; good food, good company - What more could a man ask for? “You too, now I should warn you I have strict instructions on what you can and can not eat. Stiles made me repeat them to him to make sure I understood. He would make a great teacher.”

John’s face fell thinking all his favourite food’s were about to disappear until Tony reassured him,

“Relax John I won’t deny you meat but I will not lie if Stiles asks.”

John let a sigh of relief. “I love him, I do but you shouldn’t mess with a man’s meat.”

Tony was proud he was a grown up but he at least showed his sense of humour. “You should be glad I am a grown Federal Agent or I wouldn’t have been able to resist the innuendo there.”

John chuckled. “Who said I wanted you too?”

Tony smiked. “Touche.”
John asked. “So what do you do when you are not chasing down leads?”

Tony’s face lit with enthusiasm. “I watch old movies, play my piano and play as much sport as my lungs will let me.”

John frowned. “Your lungs?”

Tony shrugged it off for now as it was a date and he liked the light-hearted time they were having. “I may have had a small run in with the pneumonic plague. Short story - I survived.” Tony wanting to distract him. “So what about when you are not running the county?”

John shrugged. “I like shooting and listening to Jazz music.”

The shooting practice was becoming more and more necessary the longer he stayed in Beacon Hills as the events got stranger and more dangerous.

The conversation kept flowing and at the end of the night Tony found himself not wanting the date to end. He offered to walk John home, wanting to extend the evening. John was a widower and this was his first serious date since his wife’s death and Tony wasn’t going to push.

When he got to the Stilinski door he would have been happy to leave, and text John for a lunch date tomorrow. It was his plan, so he was grinning when John pulled him close and delivered a steamy kiss that had him gasping for breath.

John recovered first, “See you tomorrow Tony.”

“You can count on it.”

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Tony may have enjoyed his first date with John but his next two dates would ruin him for anyone else. He doubted anyone could top finding out about what went bump in the night. The third date involved breaking a massive corruption and murder family, the Argents, that targeted families (werewolves).

The look on his teammates faces when he came to work the next day to a personal handshake by the Director of the FBI. He just wished he could have taken a photo to message John. Oh well, he shocked them further when he took up of the offer to run the FBI San-Francisco Office. He loved the weather and people down in California - both far less toxic. And then there was John.
Chapter Summary

Tony gets to play guard duty for Hotchner when he is threatened by the Reaper.

Chapter Notes

Many thanks to Edronhia for the rapid beta and making this chapter way better!

The chapter is for Red_Pink_Dots, mefeather and coastiewife465 who all asked for Aaron Hotchner

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Tobias Fornell was now the Deputy Director of the FBI, his work and his sacrifices had meant he had more than earned the promotion. It was the other two agents with him that got Derek curious. One was older, ex-military from the way he still carried himself and the other agent appeared mercurial and he liked it that way Derek could guess. The second agent was gorgeous and wore suits to accentuate the fact but there was more there than what was on the surface, his eyes spoke of intelligence.

“What can the BAU do for Washington today?” Derek asked.

Fornell rolled his eyes. “Is Agent Hotchner in his office?”

Derek wisely said nothing sarcastic, just a simple. “Yes Sir.”

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Fornell was too old to let other people’s opinions bother him so he simply strode into the office stating. “You will accept the help of DiNozzo.”

Hotchner looked up from his papers. “Sorry Sir. On what case?”

Fornell smirked knowing that Hotchner got even more formal when he was pissed with the situation. “The Reaper has made a formal threat against you specifically and I will not tolerate it.”

Hotchner could hear an order there so didn’t bother to argue because he may be the leader of the BAU but he still had bosses. “Who is to be my shadow?”

Tony smirked. “I am and you would be doing me a favour Agent Hotchner.”

“Do I get a name?” Aaron asked bemused.

“Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo, NCIS.” The Agent responded already checking out the environment.

Hotchner watched because those actions were that of a soldier, not a Navy Cop. “How would guarding me from a serial killer be a favour?”

Tony smiled and damn, Aaron could almost hear the women of the unit sigh wistfully already. “Well Sir, I’m presuming you won’t try to force a gay agent to seduce an innocent arm dealer’s daughter would you?”

Aaron was taken aback by the blunt response and if what he said was true, it was deplorable. “No, I would definitely not.”

Tony let his relief show. “Good to know. I won’t be a handicap as I’m ABD in criminal profiling.”

Aaron found the phrasing interesting as it said a lot about the Agent. He also noticed Gibbs wince
ah, so he was at fault there, or at least knows of the problem and feels guilt.

Gibbs spoke up gruffly. “You were never the idiot, you played a role and I forgot because of the explosion DiNozzo. I can’t change the past but I can fix this.”

Tony nodded at his boss. “I know boss and I won’t let you down.”

“You never did Tony, watch his six.”

Aaron looked to his new bodyguard. “Will you stay standing?”

Tony shrugged. “Not if you stay in the office.”

Aaron winced. “Well I need to interview Carl Arnold, he claims to have information about Foyet.”

Tony picked up his suit jacket. “Let’s go then.”

Tony could see the frown mar the Agent’s face and Tony felt that was a tragedy. “Don’t frown Hotchner and it is not negotiable. You heard Toby.”

Aaron was still trying to wrap his head around the fact that the Deputy Director got him a model bodyguard. He was trying to shake his thoughts since the bold statement of DiNozzo being gay. Oh well, Haley would be too shocked to have a fit when she found out.

Aaron was intrigued by his new bodyguard. “You’re okay with going to a Supermax with the worst scum to have a chat.”

Tony shrugged it off. “Yeah I am, Hotchner I was handcuffed to Jeffery White for the last twenty-four hours of his life.”
Tony saw the widening of his eyebrows as he understood what Tony hadn’t said. He could tell the Agent was brooding and he had only the briefest facts of the previous encounter between Hotchner and Foyet – He had no idea what it was like between him and this Carl Arnold, aka the Fox. “Well while you drive and brood I have some case files to read.”

Aaron didn’t know what to say to that as the only other person who would call him on his moods was Rossi. Speaking of the Devil, his phone went. “Why has our fearless leader abandoned us for a pretty boy?”

Aaron huffed but could see the amusement on DiNozzo’s face. “You should stop repeating Garcia verbatim. Oh, and pretty boy is a respected Special Agent on loan by orders of the Deputy Director.”

Rossi sighed. “We’ve had words about me being left with the kids with no warning.”

Hotchner was out of his funk. “Well, I had to go and see the Fox so you’re just going to have to deal with it.”

Hotchner shut the call off, not wanting to say anything more. Rossi would keep the office running and would soon see when he opened his email what Hotchner wanted to happen in his absence.

Tony put the case files back into his briefcase and sighed, he was no stranger to deviants. “When I was on the force in Baltimore I had a run in with the Creeper and managed to bury him with one conversation. Do I have permission to play my own games if I think it will yield results?”

Aaron switched from impressed to astonished at just how quickly DiNozzo managed to adapt to any situation. “How do you play it? The interrogator, the seducer or the friend?”

Tony gave him a blinding smile. “I think you know the answer to that, don’t you?”

_All three._
Tony walked through the supermax hearing the leering calls and the several suggestive cat-calls. He could see the man next to him tensing up and wanted to remind Hotchner that he was more than okay handling the nasty deviants of the world. “Hey, it is reinforced glass and I know what I look like but Hotchner ... All they have left are bitter dreams and fantasies.”

Aaron nodded. “Let’s go talk to Arnold and get out of here.”

They stepped into the conference room and Tony just sat down. He didn’t even bother with the niceties or let Hotchner introduce them. He saw the fascination on Arnold’s face. “Agent Hotchner you didn’t tell me you were bringing me a gift?”

*Wow.* *Life goals, right there,* to be considered a gift for a serial killer.

Hotchner was a skilled interrogator in his own right but he saw a tour-de-force. He didn’t want Tony just as a guard, he wanted him in one of the units, even if it wasn’t his own. He was too good to be wasted at NCIS. Arnold was a sexual predator of the worst kind and yet Tony came in and sweet talked him into revealing everything they wanted. Arnold was also so sure of himself and smug, wanting to take control of any meeting. So of course, Aaron knew that at some point Arnold was going to try and poke at him - the lack of wedding ring being the obvious route.

“Yeah I took the wedding rings and you seem to have lost yours.”

Tony smiled sweetly as he put his hand over Aaron’s looking to all the world like he was a man infatuated. “Yeah, it was a deal breaker before we said yes.”

Aaron would have to say he would treasure the shocked and horrified face on Arnold for a long time to come. The serial killer lived to control his environment and while there were many things that Tony DiNozzo may be, controllable wasn’t one of them. Hotchner, who liked rules, was finding that idea more and more appealing.
Arnold reared back in surprise. “I don’t believe you.”

Well, that sounded like a challenge to Tony but he had his opening and went for it with ruthless efficiency. He spoke in vivid detail about all the things he did to Aaron, and all the things that Aaron had wanted to do to him. Aaron was a professional so he wouldn’t give anything away but he could admit to a few of those images flashing through his mind.

Arnold sneered. “He will find out about your pretty boy you know and kill him to make you hurt.”

Tony had to laugh. “Will he? So he is in contact with you then, Carl.”

Arnold petted his hand and it took everything in Tony not to recoil. He would react when he had what he need. “I’m sorry you will be involved but Foyet feels like Agent Hotchner has emasculated him so he seeks retribution.”

Tony leaned forward, “Will he come for me, or, his family? Come on, tell me I deserve that much don’t I?”

Hotchner looked through the book Carl had brought with him. “He knows about family ... He doesn’t know about you unless Carl tells him.”

Tony could see the vicious predatory grin and Tony knew the answer. He needed to make sure though so he stacked the deck in his favour. Tony used a classic cop move and Arnold didn’t even see the slam against the desk coming. “I may be pretty but I only bend over for the Agent.”

“HE WILL COME FOR YOU!” Arnold shouted as they left.

Aaron was impressed with how calm his gaurd was but had to ask. “Do you often bait serial killers?”

“I have to get my kicks somehow,” Tony replied with a smirk.
Aaron’s frustration was growing. “He will go after Haley and she is in Federal Protection.”

Tony rolled his eyes. “I’m an all action guard and your ex-wife and son are enjoying a holiday at the beach with the scariest CIA agent I know.”

Aaron huffed. “You already guessed this might happen.”

Tony shrugged it off. “I have a unique point of view, I am a cop and I worked inside the Mob. I asked myself what Don Mancuso would have done.”

Aaron found himself asking. “What level did you rise to?”

Tony played it cool. “He called me son and to this day consider me his heir. I am apparently more ruthless and therefore most likely to succeed and it was because I put him in prison. Strange guy really.”

Aaron just knew Tony was going to cause trouble and disruption but he figured maybe it was what his life needed. “Why did you make Foyet come at you?”

Tony smiled. “I chose this life and its dangers - I can take care of myself and by focussing his interest on me, there’s less chance of him going after your family. Plus you know I’ve set a trap, don’t you?”

Aaron rolled his eyes with sarcasm evident. “Yes, I caught that.”

&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*

Life went on, Tony kept a watch on Aaron’s ass and the team found him very useful for the weird music case. He was then vital to the the military murders and his military connections were invaluable. Dave was hovering in his doorway so Aaron asked him.
“Can I help you, Dave?”

“Your gorgeous Italian shadow has disappeared,” his old friend commented in the way only an old friend can comment.

Aaron looked up from his paperwork. “His name is Tony which you well know.”

“You didn’t deny my comment about his looks,” Rossi noted.

Aaron snorted. “What response do you want to hear?”

“A truthful one.”

Aaron sighed as that was a loaded question. “He is tasked as my protection by the Deputy Director, Dave.”

Dave smirked, knowing what to ask. “So what will you do when he is no longer tasked with your protection?”

Aaron stopped writing and for a second he let himself want. He hadn’t done that since Haley had walked out of the door. He had work and Jack, and he told himself he was okay with that - it had to be enough.

&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&

Tony had worked well with the BAU and enjoyed the job even with the heavy toll that these criminals can cause. Tony had kept a careful watch on Aaron and as a result, he’d learned his mannerisms. This phone-call had set him on edge, and as soon as it ended he was tearing out of the BAU. Tony was having none of it, he phoned down to security and asked them to stall Hotchner until he got there. The man was not allowed to get himself killed before he could even ask him on a date.

Morgan queried. “What are you doing?”
“Something stupid. Send backup to my position but keep them at least a block away for now.”

That got Derek’s attention and Tony had to placate him quickly. “Look sometimes less is more and until I know what we’re dealing with ... more people could spook the situation.”

Derek had to defer to Tony’s experience and he knew how skilled Tony was at undercover. “The second you are worried don’t wait.”

Tony nodded and steeling himself for whatever situation he was walking into. He’d had no confirmation but he could sense this was Foyet - finally making his move.

In the foyer, Aaron was starting to shout. “Why am I still here?”

Tony took charge. “I asked him to keep you.”

Aaron whirled around in surprise, almost as if he’d forgotten Tony. “I have to go, he has Jack.”

Tony rolled his eyes. “I would never stop you going for your son. I just don’t want you to go alone ... That is a sure-fire way to end up dead.”

Aaron nodded. “Thank you.”

Tony chuckled. “Don’t thank me yet, let’s make sure we all survive.”

Aaron nodded and they went to his car. Tony was on the phone, he wanted to know how the protective custody got broken - and why the hell he wasn’t informed!

“I need a trace on Haley Brooks and her son now!” Tony ordered.

Tony did not like what he was hearing. “Kort you promised me they were the best so why does a
serial killer have Jack Hotchner.”

Aaron clutched the wheel and put his foot down on the gas. “He has him?”

Tony sighed. “Your wife and son went out shopping today and they were in a store when Jack was snatched.”

Aaron softly corrected. “Ex-wife and where is she?”

Tony informed him. “She is receiving treatment and demanding updates apparently.”

Aaron had to focus on the matter in hand. He would not get into a conversation about Haley as she was no longer a part of his life. The end of their marriage had hurt but she chose it. “Foyet wants to make me hurt ... Taking Jack would do it.”

Aaron knocked his front door, gun raised. He was the distraction for Tony to move around the back. It was the way it had to go down if they were to have a chance - They would use the obsession he had to take him down.

“He will hear the gun.” Aaron had said.

Tony smirked. “Oh, he won’t hear me coming I was trained by a Marine.”

“Do come in Aaron,” the nightmare voice ordered.

Aaron couldn’t freak out at seeing his son in the killer’s arms even though that is what he wanted to do. “Your quarrel is with me.”

Foyet snorted. “My quarrel? You emasculated me!”

He hated every second of Jack sobbing, it was cutting him to the quick. Aaron was usually so
controlled but this was different - this was Jack, his son. “You want me, not Jack ... There is no challenge.”

Foyet thought about the words but the glittering hatred in those eyes didn’t conceal any of the Reapers madness. “Challenge, no ... But the potential for your misery well, then he is just a means to an end.”

Aaron watched as Tony stood to the side, just out of the eye line of him. Tony’s voice rang out loud in the silence. “Hey, douchebag. He is a kid.”

Foyet head whipped around with a grin. “So this is the new love interest. Oh, now he would cause pain more than killing your ex would. That is why I didn’t kill her, I figured you would be rid of her then.”

Tony hated serial killers, they were crazier than a box of frogs. “We haven’t even got to first base yet as I have been protecting him from your crazy ass.”

Yep, he was going down the bait-the-serial-killer route. He remembered Gibbs lecture the last time he used the tactic.

Foyet sneered, “Oh but he wants to. Just look in his eyes.”

Tony smirked. “And you think you will get in the way of my life. Sweetheart you are barely a blip, just an inconvenience.”

Aaron saw it, the anger and the desire to prove Tony wrong. The gun moved away from Jack and Tony threw a knife straight at Foyet. The knife hit him in the eye, Foyet got one good shot off at Tony before he fell back dead. Jack scrambled over to his Dad who was lying by the pretty Agent. “Is he going to be okay?”

Tony chuckled but it was a little weak. He hated getting shot. “Did I get him?”

Aaron was keeping Jack away from the sight. “Yeah Tony you got him.”

“Good, god what an asshat ... How could he want to hurt Jack, he is awesome.”
Jack giggled. “He is funny.”

Aaron nodded. “I think he is in shock, help is on its way.”

Tony nodded knowing the drill. “Hate painkillers, they will make me loopy and spill all kinds of things. Stupid Foyet bringing a knife to a gunfight.”

Aaron understood what he meant. “Don’t worry I won’t let anyone near you.”

Tony started to lose his battle to stay awake. “It’s your oh so fine ass I am worried I will speak poems about.”

&&&&&&&&

Aaron stood over Tony’s bed as he slept. This beautiful stubborn man had killed his personal nightmare and all because Foyet dared to threaten his son and him. There was a cry of Daddy disturbing his vigil.

Aaron didn’t think, he picked his son up and kissed his forehead, grateful that he would get a chance. Aaron liked the fact he had Tony and Jack in one room. He liked the appearance of his ex-wife far less, he could tell this wasn’t going to be a fun exchange due to the scorn on her face. He didn’t need bitterness, he needed Tony to wake up so he could see those beautiful green eyes.

“You are standing a little close for a co-worker Aaron.”

Aaron could not believe she wanted to play that game here but he was up to the task. “He is not my co-worker Haley and the divorce let’s me see who I like. I was kind enough to wait until we divorced.”

She flushed but her anger was stronger than her shame. “He got hurt by your job too.”
Now that was an arrow to the heart. It was the one part of his job that he could never reconcile with, the idea of his loved ones or those closest to him being at risk.

Tony may be injured and sleepy but there was no way he was going to let this woman hurt Aaron any further. "Lady - I had the damn plague and survived, so a douchebag serial killer won’t scare me."

Jack giggled. "He’s still funny Daddy."

Aaron’s relief showed on his face and he didn’t even try and stop the smile. "Yes, he is."

Haley huffed. "I don’t need to see this. I will go down to the coffee shop and be back in an hour."

Tony frowned as he didn’t quite understand the scene. He knew who the woman was, it was the Ex but she seemed jealous. It didn’t make sense as she was the one who had divorced Aaron.

Jack peeked at Tony from his Daddy’s shoulder. "Will he be okay Daddy?"

Aaron smiled because his son had a big heart. "Yeah, the doctors want to make sure the bad man didn’t hurt him too badly."

Jack motioned to be put down and Aaron allowed him to, watching with eagle eyes his approach to Tony’s bed. The gunshot was a through and through - the hospital was demanding an overnight stay at least so they could monitor his lungs. His son approached Tony very carefully and mindful of the monitor hugged him.

Aaron could see the caution on Tony’s face but watched as he sunk into his son’s hug. Finally the look of awe as he listened to what Jack said. Aaron would love to ask what was said but it was clear it was a secret between the two people on the bed. He felt a bit left out until Tony patted the bed. "Come join us."
Tony arrived at the BAU headquarters a week after Foyet was killed to see Gibbs standing there with an Agent he recognised.

“Tony it’s time you meet the new Director of NCIS, Leon Vance.”

Tony’s face had a dawning realisation so Jenny had not managed to survive her little attempted unsanctioned operation. *Shame.* Not really, Tony would have probably survived by the skin of his teeth but if she had talked a newbie into it - They would have likely ended up dead, all for petty revenge. “Pleasure to meet you, Sir.”

Vance shook his hand. “I wanted to congratulate you on the fine work you did on resolving the Foyet threat.”

Tony nodded but said little because it was his job and he had a personal interest in the matter. He liked Aaron’s fine ass and he was invested in making sure it stayed alive. “Does this mean I can come home?”

Vance looked at Aaron and asked the leader. “Could we avail yourselves of a conference room please?”

Aaron wanted to be there but this was NCIS business and he had no right. He looked at Tony “You can use the BAU’s. It’s currently free.”

Vance just nodded his head in thanks and Gibbs, Tony and Vance all went into the room alone.

“Let’s all take a seat.” Vance suggested in such a way that there was no option.

Tony took a seat next to Gibbs, falling into old habits. “So I can now come back to NCIS, how will this work and what deal did they work out with Madam Director?”
Vance was amused, now starting to see the seasoned professional behind the persona. He would love to find out why people thought he was a clown and a casanova. The only thing Vance could assume it was because that was what DiNozzo wanted them to think.

Vance took the lead, “With the evidence and logs you provided, Secretary Davenport suggested Sheppard should take medical retirement which she agreed with ... I would have preferred charges brought but that would put NCIS into some very undesirable political attention.”

Tony wasn’t too bothered as he would leave those decisions to the higher ups. “Okay, so this was just a loan out as they were unsure what role I would take with Gibbs returning?”

Tony had thought a lot about it while he was the BAU and he realised something - He was no longer happy staying as the SFA for the MCRT. He was no longer content to stay in the shadows.”

Vance nodded. “Well I have a proposition for you. The MCRT caseload is doubling and I propose a split of the teams... Gibbs’ team will focus on terrorism related cases: DiNozzo your team will focus on Serious Crimes thus utilising your specialisms.”

Tony’s smile was massive. “That sounds like a fantastic opportunity Director, I won’t let you down.”

Vance shook his hand. “Sorry but you’ll have to pick agents for your own team.”

Tony tried to play it cool. “No need to apologise, I will enjoy picking the members and getting the balance right for the focus shift.”

Tony knew Vance had caught his implication, he just hoped Gibbs hadn’t as he wasn’t in the mood to fight. “I will see you at the office. Gibbs and I will give you a chance to say goodbye.”

Tony wondered why Gibbs was even there as he had barely said a word. Oh! That was too funny. He was there because Vance was making a point - Leon Vance was in charge. Tony found himself liking the new Director and he liked him more for the chance to start afresh with a new team of his own making.
Aaron walked in. “So no more guard duty to brighten my day?”

Tony snorted. “No, I am back to my agency but this is a good thing.”

“Oh?” Aaron asked stepping closer.

Tony closed the gap no longer having to hold back because of his job and kissed him the way he’d wanted to for the last three weeks. “Yeah, it means I can date you, make Haley hate me and take Jack to the movies like I promised.”

Aaron had mirth in his eyes because his ex-wife definitely did not like Tony. “Do I get to be there?”

Tony had a dazzling grin. “You get to play a co-lead role of course. So what do you think?”

Aaron knew there was only one sensible answer. “How can I say no?”
Chapter Summary

"How is it you to go to the movies with your boyfriend and you get shot at?"

Tony smirked. "I guess I am lucky that way."

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for WalterSkinnner, mefeather, Red_Pink_Dots, ice_phoenix, VelvetKyra, lunnahahn, and katie and for anyone who asked for Ian Edgerton.

Tony couldn’t believe he had a free afternoon at the same time his lover did. Yes, that’s right. Tony had a serious long term lover and it would be an even bigger shock to everyone to know it was a very sexy male FBI agent. They were both in LA at the same time and Ian had phoned him up.

“Hey so you’re in town, I’m in town and the Los Angeles theatre has a matinee showing of Sorry Wrong Number."

Tony walked away from Tim and Ziva who were arguing about what to do with their afternoon off before their red eye flight back home. “Hello sexy - so you planning on seducing me?”

Ian snickered. “Oh, I will do that and so much more. Meet you there?”

Tony signed off with a very bland acceptance. It grated on him but when he and Ian had first met - it just wasn’t safe for either of them to acknowledge how much they cared for the other. Ian was a Sniper in Special Forces and Tony was a young Detective on the force. Attitudes were slowly changing but back then they would have had no chance. You couldn’t do their jobs and worry about a lack of backup.

McGee rolled his eyes. “Do you seriously have a date? We only just landed here yesterday!”

Tony smirked knowing how much it bugged the other agent. He had to laugh as poor McClueless didn’t realise that most of his dates were him snatching time with Ian or just outrageous phone calls between the couple for their own amusement. Their lives were not easy but they made it work.
“Yes, I do. You will have to keep Ziva company and I will meet you at the Airport.”

McGee stiffened. “Gibbs won’t like it.”

Gibbs snorted. “Tony is a big boy now and I only order him about on the job. Now all of you get out of here, I want to have my coffee in peace.”

Tony quickly made an exit stage left. He heard a screeching howl that could only belong to Ziva and had to smile. He had no doubt his nosy aggravating co-workers would try and tail him but they had no chance. He could evade a tail better than most, it kind of was an important skill when taking on rougher undercover assignments. He weaved around the streets, remembering them from a holiday he’d taken in the city of Angels before.

Ian was standing there in Tony’s favourite dark shirt and slacks. It was too bad they were going into a dark theatre room because Ian’s ass was made to be ogled in those pants. Ian hugged him close. “It’s been too long.”

Tony agreed and wondered what they could do about it. That was a thought for later, right now he just wanted to revel in the fact that he and Ian could spend time together. The seats were comfy, more like couches - it was a new thing in more exclusive cinemas. Tony smirked when the lights fell and sat on Ian’s lap. The movie was one he’d seen a thousand times so Ian was of far more interest to him.

Ian didn’t blink and teased Tony within reason of them being in public. They were both Federal agents and as sexy as public acts might be for some, it wasn’t smart for them. “You should be watching the movie,” Ian whispered in his ear.

Tony shivered. “You are more interesting.”

Ian was flattered, knowing just how important movies were to Tony. “Flatterer.”

Tony’s breath hitched when Ian kept up teasing patterns on his leg. It was a major weakness of his
and Ian knew it. Tony whispered. “Damn, I have missed your magic hands.”

Ian chuckled, low and dirty, ramping up his desire. “Oh babe, I want to do so much more than that.”

Tony wondered why they wanted to watch the movie instead of finding a hotel room. It was one of the perils of their type of relationship, both lived in and around Quantico but Ian’s job kept him moving all around the country. “Name the place.”

Any further thoughts were cut short hearing the telltale sound of a gunshot and the screams. Tony wondered what it said about the pair, that rather than run from the danger - they ran towards it.

The gunshots were not over and their training and instincts took over. They covered the innocent public members and Tony prayed that they survived this. He was going to hunt down the shooter and make him paying for ruining his date.

The shooting then stopped, so either the sniper was out of bullets or their objective was achieved. “IAN!”

Ian forgot about staying hidden for the sake of any priority. Tony could handle anything that came at him. “Not dead babe. Stay alive.”

Tony snorted and fell back on humour. “Next time let’s just find a room.”

Tony got up from the would-be second victim at the same time Ian lifted himself off his protectee. Tony was armed, as was Ian and luckily their badges were clipped to their belts - That way they wouldn’t be mistaken for civilians. Tony looked pissed. “Where from?”

Ian already knew. “That building over there.”

Tony sighed. “Back-up is coming but I’ve got your six, your call.”
Ian was off down the street and Tony was keeping up with him. It wasn’t what he had in mind for their date but it would do. They entered the alleyway, just in time to see a suspect exit. “Freeze FBI!”

The person bolted off in the opposite direction and Tony found himself asking, “Why do they always run?”

Ian snorted. “Because they are stupid!”

Tony’s lungs were better but he couldn’t be bothered to run. He saw the football on a shop stand and ‘borrowed it’. He pitched the football forward and watched it slam into the perp’s head causing him to crash to the ground in an ungainly heap. It would have been funny if the perp wasn’t wanted for shooting innocents.

Tony ambled up at a more sedate pace as Ian cuffed the idiot. “How is it that we went on a date and did the local LEO’s job for them?”

Ian smirked. “We can multitask? Oh, and there is no way this will stay with the cops.”

Tony shrugged as it was as good as explanation as any. “I love how you Feebs always announce you’re coming, real smart with a sniper.”

Teasing about their respective agencies was just a part of their relationship. It was always good natured and never mean. Ian, in all honesty, had no good response because Tony was right, there was no justifiable reason why you would do that.

Sure enough, not ten minutes after the event was finished, the FBI local agents were rolling up to the scene in their Sedans. Tony guessed given the surprised look on the lead Agents face, the guy knew Ian.

“Eppes you’re late to the party!” Ian teased the new guy.

Eppes didn’t bother to hide the shock. “So this is the shooter?”
Ian nodded. “Shooter this afternoon yeah, unlucky for him two Federal Agents just happened to be in the cinema.”

Don snickered. “I’m SSA Don Eppes.”

“SFA Anthony DiNozzo. NCIS.” Tony responded shaking the guy’s hand, unlike Gibbs he knew how to make friends with people who might be useful.

Don nodded. “So this is the guy who shot five people today?”

That got the guy’s attention. “WHAT? No, I just wanted to get my cheating girlfriend. GQ saved her!”

Eppes had to snort. “GQ is a respected NCIS Federal Agent who carries a gun so I would avoid talking about his looks.”

Ian glowered, he was not blind to his lover’s looks but Tony was so much more than his appearance. Ian looked to Tony because even a glib comment that revealed him deserved a question - It was just good fortune that they had been together for long enough to no longer need words.

Ian loved the fact his persona was such that all he needed to say was. “And his partner is a sniper.”

The perp’s eyes bugged out and he looked scared. Ian could be offended, all he had done was look at the guy. It was not his fault the guy was easily scared.

“I didn’t shoot those others, I just wanted to get at my bitch of a cheating girlfriend.”

Tony growled. “So dump her, you don’t shoot at people ... Not ever. You moron !”
Ian had to smile at his lover showing just what he was made of. The shooter, so big and mighty recoiled at Tony’s anger. He noted even Don seemed surprised by Tony’s reaction. Then to add a surreal gloss to tidings, Gibbs appeared on the scene throwing his weight around.

Gibbs stomped over to Tony and everyone held their breath. “How is it is you go to the movies with your boyfriend and get shot at?”

Tony shrugged. “I’m lucky that way and Ian objected to the shooter calling himself a sniper.”

“Didn’t police their brass.”

There was a matching sneer on both of their faces and Tony did not like this. He did not need his lover and boss connecting. “Thanks for the concern boss and where are the duplicitous duo?”

Gibbs smirked, “Running around chasing their tails in the airport. I told them you were going early to meet your lover at the terminal.”

Tony snickered because neither Tony nor Gibbs were happy when Vance insisted they stay on the team. Well, they would do as they were told but no one didn’t say that they couldn’t have some fun at David’s and McGee’s expense.

Gibbs was happy. “Well, I guess Vance will let us stay here for...”

Tony smirked. “Inter-Agency cooperation?”

Gibbs nodded. “Yeah that you will have to sell.”

Tony didn’t care because he could stay in LA with Ian and Gibbs and solve a case like the good old days. The fact of Ian and Gibbs both being in LA meant that the viral sniper shooters didn’t last long but that was a different story.
Is that who I am? (Will Lexington)

Chapter Summary

Tony sat in a bar listening to the lyrics of the country singer depressed that they fit too well. Things may be looking up when the singer sits next to him.

Chapter Notes

Will Lexington is a character on the soon to be CMT show Nashville. He plays a country singer struggling with his sexuality played by Chris Carmack - the Song lyrics used in the fic are lyrics used in the show and can be found here: - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gr5lVCDvPQY

Massive thanks go to Edronhia who made this chapter way more readable.

Chapter for Red_Pink_Dots who asked for this pairing :D

• Is that who I am? (Will Lexington) Red_Pink_Dots

Tony was in Nashville of all places but all was good. He had found a hidden bar out of the way of the Honky-Tonk dancers and was nursing a beer as he decided what he was going to do regarding his career. He wasn’t being dramatic - he needed to make a decision about what he would put up with and what to do about it when it became too much. It was then the singer started and Tony paid attention as the lyrics struck a chord. The guy was good but that was not what drew him to the song and the singer. The man himself was gorgeous but it was the pain in the guy’s voice too - Tony could relate.

I've always been broken underneath my smile

So you think that I was, happy all the while

If I'm being honest, I didn't stand a chance, is that who I am?

Ouch. Tony put his beer down and listened closer. It was ridiculous and sad just how well the lyrics
fit him. He’d played a character because Gibbs had asked him to. The only trouble was for the last few years, Gibbs had forgotten the character was not the real him. He was not a playboy clown and the probies should now have a thick enough skin to handle the job and Gibbs. The only trouble was Tony had spent so long playing the role and deflecting Gibbs anger that he had almost forgotten himself. He was a good cop, and he followed the rules - why should he ever doubt his instincts?

_Staring at my shadow, for way too long,_

_If never did nothing then nothing could go wrong,_

_I've always been singing, I've never had a song,_

_Is that who I am?_

Tony understood the song only too well. He was lost and searching for answers and it was startling to realise it was _him_ who was lost. Tony had forgotten himself having played one too many roles in the recent past. The thoughts kept bouncing around his skull but there was one question that remained: _What was he going to do about it?_

_I see big bright lights burning in the atmosphere, calling my name, calling my name..._

_Sayin' I, I don't have to be, the way I've been,_

Tony could leave because he had done it before and reinvented himself. It wasn’t too difficult but he wasn’t getting any younger and he had one more life-changing move in him he reckoned. Still, if it would save his mental heath then surely, it would be worthwhile.

_And, I still got a lot of soul underneath my skin,_

_It's calling my name, calling my name,_

_Is that who I am?_

Tony would wait until the guy’s set was over and buy him a drink. He wasn’t stupid enough to hit on the guy even if he was cute. It wasn’t because Tony was closeted or homophobic, he just didn’t want to make the singer’s life difficult. It wasn’t safe in law enforcement and it just wasn’t smart in country music. Tony knew attitudes were changing - it was just taking a little longer in certain sectors.

_Am I just a lost soul, blowing in the wind,_

_Or a coward, scared to look within?_
Tony did have a brave heart and he had no problem starting again. He couldn’t believe that it was a song making him reevaluate his feelings. He couldn’t live for Abby and making sure Gibbs stayed safe. What about him? Was it selfish to live for himself? He wouldn’t make life changing decisions over a pint but he would certainly give it more thought.

The singer ambled up to the bar next to him and Tony seized the initiative. “What can I get ya?”

The singer, Will Lexington, turned to face him. “You buying?”

Tony smirked recognising the signs and maybe the singer was braver than he thought. “Seems like the least I can do to thank you for the music.”

The singer looked sheepish but even that was cute. “Wasn’t too depressing?”

Tony shook his head. “No, more helpful than you will ever know..”

The singer cocked his head. “You’re welcome.”

Tony chuckled, motioning to the chair next to him. “Too deep for tonight. Sit awhile if you have time.”

Will slid onto the chair. “So what brings you to Nashville?”

“My job,” Tony grinned. “The music helps though - I love to play when I have the time.” He didn’t hide his smile or his passion for the music. He would spend more time with music if NCIS wasn’t such a demanding job.

Will smiled and asked him. “What do you play?”

“I love playing the piano.” Tony confessed.

Will smiled easy and friendly. “Now see I would have pegged you as a model.”
Tony laughed. “I think the Government would object, I’m a Federal Agent.”

Will’s eyes dropped to Tony’s hips as if searching for his gun or handcuffs. “Exciting.”

The conversation and the sparks flowed between them even though they had an unspoken rule not to touch each other, knowing it would be too dangerous. The alcohol wasn’t helping - it was just loosening Will’s inhibitions. “I don’t know why I am talking so much to you ... you must think I’m so boring.”

Tony shook his head. “I think you know who you are and you have chosen a difficult path and it is one of the bravest things you can do.”

Will looked at him with a sad smile and Tony would do anything to wipe the sadness off his face. He was too handsome to look that sad.

Will confessed. “You know, you make me want something different.”

Tony blushed and stood up throwing money on the counter. “Let’s get out of here, I think you need some fresh air to clear your mind.”

Will appreciated the attempt at saving his honour but Tony was making him feel more alive than ever before. Tonight he’d been bitter, hence the song, but that wasn’t how he felt any more.

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Tony and Will wandered around the streets of Nashville and then headed towards the river. Their walk ended by the river and Tony looked at Will and could see so many fierce emotions at play. Tony decided to throw caution to the winds and bared his soul. “I want nothing more than to take you back to my hotel room and give you a night you will never forget but you’ve worked too hard. I won’t ruin it for you Will.”

Will sucked in a breath. “Fuck them, I want you for myself.”

Tony giggled and took him back to his hotel room and delivered on his promise.

Will woke the next morning knowing he should move before the streets got too busy. He had a meeting with the head of the label about a tv programme they wanted him to go on. They wanted
him to do some heavy duty reality tv thing where he would fake a relationship with another up and coming country star, Layla Grant. The thought made him sick to the stomach and last night with Tony made him realise he would never be able to go through with it.

His hands started stroking Tony’s flank. “Hey don’t you need to be waking up soon.”

Tony’s eyes fluttered open and he had a lazy sated smile. “I sure do but if you got nowhere to be ... I’m not in a hurry.”

Will dived under the sheet wanting to stretch their time. “I don’t want this to end,” Will confessed biting his lip.

Tony pulled him back up from under the covers. “It doesn’t have to Will but I won’t harm what you are building in Nashville.”

Will nodded and seemed torn so Tony teased. “Well, you can come up to Washington ... No one understands country there.”

Will laughed as they exchanged phone numbers. He didn’t realise what a lifeline Tony would become for him. They exchanged daily conversations about everything and nothing. Tony bitched about the toxic coworkers and Will shared his stories about the ridiculous demands the record label chief had.

Tony sighed one night wistfully. “I just want my cowboy to whisk me away for some R ’n’ R.”

Will smirked. “Is that so?”

Tony was musing. “Oh yeah. You could turn up in the bullpen, shut everyone up and then we could spend the week on a beach drinking beers.”

Will smiled because it sounded good. He missed physically seeing Tony but in the meantime, Facetime would have to do. Will struggled to keep his surprise quiet but he knew it would be brilliant. You see Facetime and stolen moments were no longer cutting it - Will wanted everything and he was taking steps to achieve his dreams. He was a damn good singer and as much as he loved Country - if mainstream music let him keep Tony then that is what he would do.

Will had Gibb’s number because Tony insisted that if anything went wrong and he was injured that
he would have a contact number. The old Marine was pretty cool and took to their relationship which was why Will was now phoning him. “Hey Jethro, it’s Will. Listen I need your help to surprise Tony and I think you will like it.”

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Tony was debating snapping and telling off his duplicitous duo of workmates. He could usually take a deep breath and deal but today his temper was fraying and he couldn’t put his finger why. Gibbs broke his homicidal fantasies. “Tony I think you have a visitor.”

Tony blushed because there before him was his cowboy, and Tony knew there and then that Will was the one. He stood up and walked closer noticing he was in full cowboy mode. “You here to take me away cowboy?”

“Always Tony.” Will had a twinkle in his eye and there in front of everyone, not caring about photos or the reactions of anyone - he claimed Tony as his lover.

“You're gay?” McGee shouted.

Tony frowned. “No, I’m bisexual and jeez McClueless this is the twenty-first century.”

Ziva didn’t seem to be taking it too well, she kept frowning. “No, I do not believe this ... It is another one of your jokes.”

Now that Tony would not accept. “You know what ... I am done. You really should read my whole file after I’m gone and check the awards in the bottom file. You just might learn something.”

“What do you mean gone. You can’t just walk away!” Ziva sneered.

Tony knew the perfect answer and with Will holding his hand it was kind of a perfect moment. “Oh but I can as this is who I am.”

The resignation hit Vance’s desk a week later and Leon wasn’t sure he wanted it after all. He was starting to see just who did the work in the MCRT and it wasn’t who he thought. He was starting to
realise that he should be careful what you wish for - especially today as Gibbs had also thrown his resignation on his desk.

Tony didn’t care about the inner politics and dramas of NCIS. He was on a plane to Hawaii with Will sitting next to him and it was exciting. Tony had never truly risked his heart for anyone since Wendy but he would do so for Will - He deserved it for everything he himself was risking.

“Are we really doing this?” Tony asked, giddy for life once more.

“We sure are.” Will promised him kissing him, not caring about who saw them. They were in love and the rest of the world could go screw itself as far as Tony was concerned.

Tony grinned into the kiss. “We’re crazy and I have no idea what we will do next.”

The beach holiday was fantastic. They relaxed and indulged in recharging their batteries and lots and lots of sex. Will waited until Tony’s brain was offline from a fantastic blowjob before asking. “Will you come to the Grammy’s with me?”

Tony’s voice was mellow as he promised. “Sure thing.”

Tony was standing in front of the mirror as he adjusted his Tuxedo. “I look like a waiter.”

Will slipped behind him hugging his back. “You look like anything but a waiter, I know you will upstage half of the stars.”

“You’re my partner you have to say that.” Tony tried to retort.
“Just you watch.”

They did go to the Grammy’s and the picture of the them entwined in Tuxedos - broke the internet. Will laughed him sick when GQ offered Tony a cover shoot considering the conversation when they first met. Tony was vindictive and okayed the shoot but insisted Will do it with him.

No one new at NCIS understood why there was a ban on the copy of the new GQ but they were quietly taken aside by some of the older hands and it was explained to them. It seems like some people couldn’t stand when others were happy.
Husband Number 1 (David Rossi)

David Rossi: Husband Number 1

Before

David entered the bar hoping the good liquor would shake off the after effects of the case. It was a vain hope but it would hopefully soften some of the memories. If that failed then a good one night stand would be the next best thing.

He loved this bar in Virginia as it only served top tier whiskey which was definitely the order of the day. His eyes swept over the patrons a few times but kept heading back to the piano player. It obviously wasn’t his day job, the type of gun and badge clipped on his belt gave it away so he appeared to belong to one the Alphabet agencies.

David felt himself unwind as he drank from his tumbler and listened. It was worth every penny if he felt even a fraction better. He didn’t know what was the matter with him tonight - he had no business staring at the young piano player but he couldn’t seem to help himself. He let himself go in his mind once more even if it was more often than not a dark cavernous place.

A body slid onto the stool next to him. “Buy me a drink?”

David quirked an eyebrow. “And why would I do that?”

Tony leaned in closer. “Well, you obviously think I’m hot. The badge on your belt tells me you are a Federal Agent too so I know you won’t ask any stupid questions and I’m told I can carry a conversation.”

For the first time in a long time, David found himself laughing at the audacious nature of the man in front of him. If the man was up to flirting with him then it was only right that he step up his own game. He thought he was too old but Tony was a grown ass man who knew his own mind. Dave found himself replying. “Well, you are definitely the best-looking thing in the room.”

Tony snorted. “No, that is that piano - it is a thing of beauty.” His passion and enthusiasm shining
out of every pore and he had no idea how alluring it was to those around him.

Rossi was sure of one thing. “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I am Italian and I will not be dissuaded.”

Later

The couple treated their marriage with a similar conviction. It worked for the pairing and they understood the other - it wasn’t like they would divorce each other because of the demands of the job. They did do one thing, they kept their relationship private - not out of shame but because it was their own business and they didn’t want anyone prying into it.

They supported each other and the only time they broke their silence was for Gibbs and Hotchner after they both needed a refuge and a secret to shock them back to reality.

David marrying Husband Number 1 did the trick for Aaron and for Gibbs, just the fact that Tony was married did it.

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Now

Aaron’s frustrations were getting to a boiling point - the team was fractured from the lies told to keep Prentiss safe. He wasn’t sure how he could fix this. “What the hell do I do Dave?”

Rossi shrugged. “That is why you get the big bucks, to figure this stuff out.”

Aaron’s sardonic look spoke volumes. “I’m asking for ideas.”

“Well, why not have a meal and have it out over good food.” Rossi suggested with the hope he didn’t quite believe in his voice.
“I don’t cook.”

Rossi sighed knowing where this was going. “You want my house ... you have to ask Antoni.”

Aaron smirked. “You saying you’re ready to tell the team?”

Rossi snorted. “You’re just hoping my husband will distract the team from their own drama.”

Hotch rolled his eyes. “I won’t lie, the thought crossed my mind, plus Jack misses his Uncle Tony.”

Rossi shrugged. “I have no objection but it’s not like we can guarantee our schedules and ask the terrorists to behave for Antoni.”

Hotch snorted but knew what Rossi meant because not long before Anthony and David got married Tony finally accepted Morrow’s offer to work for him at Homeland Security. He was far happier even if he was tested more - he’d once mentioned something about a less toxic working environment. Aaron sighed. “I will text Tony then.”

Dave smirked. “Of course he will say yes, you have the perfect leverage, Jack.”

Hotch smirked because Rossi wasn’t wrong. The first dinner he’d gone to when Dave and Tony were just dating - Tony had assured him he was bad with kids. He’d never met Aaron’s son before that night but little Jack had taken one look at the wall of DVD’s and declared he wanted to talk movies with Uncle Toni and Daddy could talk with Uncle Dave in the meanwhile. The adults all smirked but acquiesced to Jack’s demands.

It was definitely going to be a fun evening.

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The house was brimming with energy, it was their home and one Rossi now loved returning to. He couldn’t believe he’d struck it so lucky with Anthony. He’d had three wives in his search for love and acceptance and had finally found it with his first and only husband. Tony would say that to any naysayers to their relationship. “Yeah sure Dave was a serial marrier ... But he was the first and would be the only husband.”

The sauce was cooking and the pasta was ready and best of all, his ring was on his finger where it belonged.

Arms surrounded him. “So are you ready for tonight?”

Rossi leant back into the firm chest of his husband. “I’m ready for there to be fewer secrets between the team to let them see what they really need to focus on.”

Tony chuckled. “And when they realise that you are married?”

Rossi smirked. “Well, they may shut up long enough to listen, plus, I get the envy for having the hottest spouse.”

“Flatterer.”

Rossi shook his head turning around to get a proper kiss. “The truth.”

There was the first knock at the door and Tony recognised the sound - it was his favourite little nephew. “I’ll get the door - you start organising the drinks.”

Tony opened the door and his knees were attacked. “Uncle ‘Toni.”

Tony had to smile, Jack always tried to say his name the way Dave did. Dave was the only one who called him Antoni and got away with it but Jack was too cute to say no to. “Hey Jack. So tell me what movies have you watched to quiz me about since we last saw each other?”
With his magic question asked, Jack was off telling Tony all about the Cars movies and this other movie about a brave princess. “Now that is cool. I like archery as much as the next person so I guess we’ll have to organise a play date with some bows and arrows.”

Jack’s face lit up. “Daddy will you let me learn with Uncle Toni?”

Hotchgrinned. “If he says yes then I have no objection but you know Uncle Toni is very busy so it may be very difficult.”

“I know but he is still cool to hang with.”

Rossi chuckled. “You are not wrong little man.”

Tony smirked as another knock was heard. “So how about me and Jack go and finish the food and you can get the team some wine and get them talking.”

Rossi snorted because everyone thought that Tony was the nice one but he was way more devious than most knew. He had a standing offer to take over a Mob family when he was done having his “rebellion”. Tony had apparently hoped when he’d married Dave it would be the end of the overtures (being made from prison mind you) but no - they got worse. “You are a devious man.”

Tony smirked. “And proud of it ... Now go and greet our next arrival.”

Rossi opened the door to see Emily and JJ. “Ladies come in ... we have quite the meal prepared for you. I tell you, you are in for a treat.”

“Close the door Dave it’s getting cold.” Tony shouted from his place in the kitchen, which was hidden by the door. Jack’s giggle filtered across the room as well putting a smile on everyone’s face.

David smirked but then hid it with great restraint. He could see the frowns and curious looks on the women’s faces. He took their coats, wedding band where it should be on his finger. “Well, you heard the man ... and I am on strict instructions to give you wine.”

Emily grinned. “Well, I like the guy already.”
“Wait until he feeds you.” Dave replied with a grin.

Emily saw a man standing over the grill, explaining something to little Jack, who was at a safe distance. It was so cute that words could not define it. Little Jack was repeating back the Italian as best as he could. The guy could cook, was good with kids and drop dead gorgeous. Emily found herself saying an Italian phrase that came to mind. “Uomo carino.”

Tony pouted. “Non abbastanza, splendido uomo”

David chuckled. “Emily, don’t tease my husband and you are wrong he is not pretty, he is gorgeous just like he says.”

“Damn, all the hot gorgeous ones are always taken, gay or married.”

JJ added in a light tone. “Or all three in the case of ...”

Tony stepped forward. “Anthony DiNozzo.” And shook their hands.

Emily knew that name. “You mean, Assistant Director of Homeland Security?”

Little Jack shook his head. “You are Uncle Toni.”

“Yes, I am and let’s check on the yummy pasta while Uncle Dave gossips.”

Jack wasn’t quite sure what he meant but trusted Tony enough to follow him. In reality the boy loved to watch Tony cook as he always got to taste the food as they went along. Aaron was sure that Jack would end up a chef with the influence of his Uncles.

JJ and Emily watched the scene and you could almost see their hearts melt. Emily couldn’t help but
“I can’t wait for Penny to meet your very delightful husband.”

Dave just handed his friend some red wine. “So that is what you are looking forward to most?”

JJ shook her head. “Reid will confound us all and you will probably break Morgan but that will be amusing to watch.”

Dave shook his head laughing because everyone assumed that JJ was the nice one and Emily was the evil one. He knew better. “If you say so, so you don’t have a problem with this?”

JJ shook her head. “It’s your personal life and you’re not obliged to say anything until you feel comfortable enough to share it with the team.”

Emily sighed. “I agree with you but you know that when people are stressed they behave unpredictably and with all the tension on the team at the moment …. “

Tony twisted around with a frown. “There will be no tension in our home, this is a refuge from crazy and anyone who can’t get with that program will be out on their ear.”

Rossi grinned. “What he said.”

Emily giggled and JJ added. “Oh, please can I record it?”

Dave shook his head. “You will just have to settle for being first-hand witnesses.”

The knock at the door signalled their next arrival. Dave headed to let the new arrivals in. “I got it - you focus on the sauce?”
Penny greeted Dave. “Did I just hear you hand off cooking duties to someone else? Just who is this person?”

Tony figured that had to be a sign that he should introduce himself. “Hello, that would be me, Tony DiNozzo.”

Penny blushed. “Hello, white chocolate hunk and just why are you delighting me?”

Tony smiled widely and pointed to Dave. “I’m that one’s husband and he asked me to cook whilst he talks some sense into the team.”

Penny looked toward the ceiling and threw her hands up as she shouted. “Hallelujah.”

Dave handed her a glass. “Was that addressed to Tony or the plan?”

Penny had an impish grin. “Both. You always did have impeccable taste.” She waited for a second. “You won’t have long to wait. Junior G-Man and Morgan are parking.”

Tony and Dave shared a smirk and it spoke of affection and an understanding that you see in couples who understand each other inside out. Aaron decided to add his own bit of fun. “Don’t break Morgan too badly I need him functioning for work.”

Tony smirked. “Too bad I don’t work for your agency.”

“And why not, aside from the whole married reason?” JJ asked. She kind of wished that Tony did work for them - He was a media relations dream.

Tony shrugged. “Well, after the second time you lot tried to arrest me for murder I just went off the idea, you know?”

Tony could tell by their looks that they thought he was being sarcastic. If only they knew. Tony knew he couldn’t judge a whole agency’s actions by one agent but it was hard. It sucked having to
take the moral high road.

The knock signalled that the last members of Dave’s team were finally here. Tony could sympathize with strained team dynamics and he’d reminded Dave earlier of just what the consequences could be.

Tony grinned. “I will get this one.”

Tony opened the door and bowed. “Hello, Dr. Reid and Agent Morgan.”

The two agents shared a look as if to say did they know what was going on. Tony wasn’t one to hide. “Oh, it’s not a secret all will be revealed tonight - for now welcome to our home.”

Tony turned his back as heard Morgan whisper to Reid. “Our home?”

Reid shrugged. “We will find out if we go inside.”

Morgan could only agree and saw the whole team was there including Hotch’s son. The women were all relaxed drinking wine and commenting on hot Italians. Derek watched Reid stiffen seeing JJ and he wanted to hit something. He hoped this dinner was going to be used to try and air a few issues.

Penny breezed through the awkward questions that seemed to be on the tip of everyone’s tongue. “My chocolate hunk you are finally here. Have you met Dave’s gorgeous Italian Stallion?”

Reid wanted to sigh because it seemed there were more secrets. Emily pouted. “Yeah, Dave has been keeping Tony hidden from all of us.”

Reid wanted to laugh at the irony. This was one secret he was ahead of the game with. “I wouldn’t say that. I found Dr. DiNozzo’s lecture to be quite insightful.”
Emily pouted. “Funny, Gorgeous, Smart and good with kids ... I kind of really hate you, Rossi.”

Morgan had caught the other part of Reid’s comment. “You know DiNozzo? ... I thought he was Homeland Security?”

Dave chuckled. “Ah, so a secret and gossip can get us all to talk to each other.”

Tony chuckled. “Oh come on, all office workspaces work on gossip ... you know this. Now let’s all sit-down and eat, I cooked and it shouldn't be wasted.”

Aaron watched with a bemused smile as all of his team followed the Assistant Director’s demand. He could guess that was one of the reasons why Morrow had stolen him for Homeland Security. “Damn, that is a neat trick.”

Tony smirked. “You too Hotch.”

The team missed Hotchner sticking his tongue out in response or they would have been too shocked to eat. Dave sat everyone down being a polite host and making sure all cutlery was ready. Tony came in with the bowl of prepared Carbonara and with a flourish added it to everyone’s plate. Jack giggled when his favourite macaroni and cheese was slid in front of him. “Thank you, Uncle Toni.”

Tony grinned right back. “You are welcome kiddo.”

The team groaned in appreciation at the good food. JJ especially. “Damn if you get bored at Homeland you should open up a restaurant.”

Tony chuckled. “Nah, I would open up a Jazz bar.”

All saw the small smile on Dave’s face and guessed it was something special to the couple. It was odd to consider two people that they had assumed would be so obviously heterosexual. It was a good lesson for the profilers - they may be the ones to study human behaviours but they could still
fall prey to assumptions about stereotypes.

JJ giggled. “Well, we would all come there to enjoy it.”

The thing was with the money between the couple if they really wanted to do it they could. The only trouble was as much the couple may crave the idea of peace and relaxation, their desire to protect those who can’t be far greater than any whims. “Nah, I work to keep the terrorists away.”

Derek and all the team raised a glass as that was a worthy reason as any. “So apart from being married to Rossi, how do you know the boy-wonder?”

Tony shrugged. “It’s like he said, we spoke when I gave a guest lecture on cross-discipline uses of investigative skills.”

Derek raised a glass as it was nice for someone to recognises the uses a skilled cop can bring to a Federal case. “Here, here. What force did you start on?”

Tony grinned. “I did stints in Baltimore, Philly, and Peoria before joining NCIS.”

Derek’s mind was racing because he knew the name of DiNozzo but for his time as a cop and not as a Federal Agent. “Wait are you the same DiNozzo who went Mob hunting in Philly and took down Little Nicky?”

Tony shuddered at the idea of just what happened when anyone called Nicodemus Scarfo that particular nickname. “If you knew the name then you would know that he disliked intensely anyone who calls him Little. He takes it personally.”

Everyone was eager to hear the story and Tony shared it. He wanted Reid to see that sometimes lies and deception were necessary to keep those close safe, no matter how much you want to tell them the truth. “I went undercover for two years as Anthony Sabella, a bastard son of the original boss before all the turf wars.”

“That was bold.” Emily observed, no stranger to crazy undercover missions.
Tony shrugged. “I was young and dumb and thought it would be an adventure.”

Dave chuckled. “You haven’t told them the best bit.”

“Hey, don’t look at me - I thought when I married you the crazy bastard would stop demanding I take over the business.” Tony said as he finished his pasta to see most of the team looking at him in shock. Tony just rolled his eyes and tried to make them understand. He was planning on subtle but sometimes taking a sledgehammer to a problem was just more effective. “Look, you deal with sickening crimes and I do not envy you but undercover is different. You suppress yourself and your life, you have to pretend to be someone else. You lie to those closest to you and it isn’t because you don’t care - it is because you have no choice for their safety. They want to get involved or to save you and it kills you but you know if you don’t they could be killed and it would be your fault.”

The whole team stared at him wide-eyed including Dave. He knew Tony was a passionate man, it was one of the reasons he’d married the guy. Dave could see that Reid was absorbing all of what Tony had said.

Reid looked to Emily. “Is it true?”

Emily nodded. “I have no desire to repeat the experience ever again. I don’t know how you did it.”

Tony shrugged because he couldn’t explain what was a natural skill. He did his best at lectures and when he guest lectured at the training facility. “I did it to bring about the end of a bad guy who needed to be taken off the streets. So I put every part of me away, rose up the ranks until I was a son. And then I took him out, the irony is that he doesn’t hold it against me and wishes I would stop rebelling and take up the mantle as the leader like I was born to do.”

JJ couldn’t hide her silence. “I was asked to search the media outlets for signs Emily’s cover was compromised. I wouldn’t have broken the cover to risk her life.”

Reid put his fork down. “I know this rationally but I am struggling.”

Tony settled it. “You can be mad, it is allowed but don’t let it ruin the team. You have something special at the BAU. Talk about your issues, don’t them fester as it can lead to an untenable situation because your team is like a family and you can’t afford dysfunction when the stakes are so high.”
Dave clutched Tony’s hand knowing what he was talking about. He was furious that anyone backing up Tony would ever dare to turn off his radio but at the same time, he couldn’t be too sorry or Tony would never have been in the bar the day they met.

“We’ll deal. Now let’s focus on lighter things like dessert. Tony’s tiramisu is to die for but you better not be driving. Jack, I made your favourite dessert for you to eat.”

“Yay!” Jack shouted and the team was hard pressed not to say the same.

Dessert was served and the mood around the table was contemplative but felt lighter somehow. Garcia was the one to sum up the evening and everyone’s thoughts.

“Rossi you truly do have the number One husband - don’t mess it up.”

“No intention of it, he is my first and only husband.”
Merits of Tom Ford v Zegna (James Bond)

Chapter Summary

James never imagined his Poker Game would land him with something far more valuable than money.

Chapter Notes

It can be any Bond I suppose but I am picturing him as Daniel Craig :D

AU:- British raised Tony for this fic.

Merits of Tom Ford and Zenga

Tony often wondered about his life and what might have happened if his Uncle Clive hadn’t intervened following his mother’s death. The family was an old family in England, one of the old money titles. A fact emphasised by the fact his uncle was in fact, Lord Clive Paddington, the fourteenth Earl of Oxfordshire.

His mother’s family had never approved of Senior - that just said that they had good taste. What they didn’t do was punish him for his father’s greed. They didn’t cut off contact with him after his mother's death. In fact, Uncle Clive decided to exert some of the family power to gain custody of Anthony or Tony as he preferred from family and friends.

Tony had found suddenly he had rules and routines. It was strange and he had rebelled as a child. Clive had weathered all of it and now Tony was a grown ass adult. He never imagined working for the British Treasury but at university, apart from sport, he found a great career for himself - Forensic Accounting.

Anthony had taken the Paddington name as a way to honour the effort they had taken on his behalf. His uncle, normally a very reserved man, had teared up when he’d asked for the name change to occur officially. For Tony, it wasn’t an empty gesture - it was a simple truth, the Paddington’s were his family because they had taken him in and made him one of them.
All that was irrelevant because right now he was sitting on a high-speed train carrying twenty million
in cash for some secret agent to play poker with a terrorist. Tony was not sure why his bosses
thought this was a good investment but hey ho, they didn’t have access to his trust fund so he didn’t
care.

“So I’m the money,” Tony announced unabashed.

Bond looked him up and down. “Every penny of it by the look of it.”

Tony smirked as he slid over his credentials showing he was an Agent of the British Agency
Taskforce and it showed his full name of Anthony Paddington. “Power of a good suit and you
would know all about that Mr. Bond, given what you wear yourself.”

Bond shrugged as it was not an unfair insight. “So how will this work?”

Tony took a sip of the wine. “Well you have ten million wired to your account in Montenegro, and a
contingency for a further five million if I deem it prudent.”

Bond could hear the thinly veiled scorn. “You don’t think this is a good idea?”

Tony snorted because that was the least of his opinion in all honesty. “You are playing a game of
poker with a terrorist and if you lose you will be responsible for the British Government directly
funding terrorism.”

Tony guessed he struck a nerve so he picked up the dinner menu. “What looks good?”

Bond responded. “Not the lamb, I’d try the veal.”

Food allowed the conversation to flow (the wine helped) but Tony never let Bond get the upper
hand. He was playing him like a fiddle and it wasn’t too hard, for all Bond’s spy tricks he’d never
had to live amongst the social elite - that was an education in itself.
“So you are telling me I shouldn’t be worried as it is a matter of probability and odds ... And there was me getting worried there was some chance involved.” Tony finished with a smirk suggesting he knew all the things that Bond was saying.

James scoffed. “You know that in poker you don’t play the hand you play the person in front of you.”

“You mean the bluff?” Tony rested back against his chair. “Well, now I am sure the money is safe.”

James smirked. “You know with my powers of reading people I can sense your sarcasm.”

Tony didn’t give an inch. “Is that all you can sense?”

James sighed. “Well, your thinly veiled sarcasm suggests you are against this plan and you don’t agree with our bosses.”

Tony snorted. “Oh, so there is a plan?”

“There is.”

Tony shrugged. “It is not my own money you are risking but it seems an awfully risky venture for little return.”

Bond would love to know more because the Treasury Agent fascinated him. He spoke English with a hint of an American accent but held the name of one of the most famous aristocratic families. It could be coincidence but then he spoke of having his own money suggesting he was part of that family - the Zegna suit was another hint.

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Bond had assumed he would buy a nice dress for the treasury agent sent to assist him and could use them as a way to distract the players. Anthony being the agent didn’t change things too much and it wasn’t like he wasn’t stunning enough, and he knew the importance of wearing good clothes.
He looked on his bed and knocked on the door to the joining bedroom. “What is this?”

“Well, there are dinner jackets and there are dinner jackets, this is the latter.”

M would be laughing her ass off as her agent was left speechless. “This is tailored.”

Tony turned around with a snort. “Please. I sized you up the moment we met on the train. Now, I need you to look like you belong at the table. Don’t worry, I will put my brain away for a few moments to distract your players.”

James chuckled. “I would love to seduce you rather than play poker with terrorists.”

Tony simpered, fluttering his eyebrows. “Well, you sure know how to show a guy a good time.”

James smirked. “I will do more than that.”

“Promises, promises.”

Tony was watching the poker game unfold and you had all the usual characters at a high-stakes poker game. He looked at Le Chiffre and he was glad he’d snuck his firearm in. As he was playing the toyboy he just had a bland smile on his face. He was waiting for the right time to play a distraction. It was funny, he never recalled a module at the university devoted to playing the distraction.

Still, he was a Paddington and they were born with spines of steel. He was trained to fight, in case he chose service in the Army, like several of his cousins. He could shoot because you couldn’t be a guest at the summer parties and not indulge in clay pidgeon shooting.
“It’s the last hand.” Dealer announced.  \textit{Guess that was his cue.}

Tony waltzed through the crowd.  “James darling are you done?” He threw in a kiss to the nape of the neck for good measure.  \textit{In for a penny, in for a pound.}

“Soon.”

Tony smirked and headed to the bar.  He stood there with Bond’s contact and watched the last game unfold.  “This is it.”

Tony’s eyes were on the blonde taking James a martini, \textit{damn it}.  His eyes narrowed because she was not a member of the bar staff that much was obvious and you didn’t need to be a detective to see the ill-will in her eyes. He’d put money on her being a plant by Le Chiffre aiming to take out any competition, like for example, Bond.

Tony moved to intercept, he knew Bond was a seasoned Agent but he wasn’t taking his eyes off Le Chiffre so he may miss it.  He swayed his hips as he moved back to the table just in time for the last hand to be called.  It was the grand finale - the cards were being turned over.  Little miss blondie was nearly at the table and Tony conveniently nudged the person in front of him to crash into her - causing the drink to spill.

She was disgruntled and Tony was even more sure of her ill will.  She was angry and Le Chiffre himself couldn’t hide his anger, which caught Bond’s attention. Good, mission accomplished in Tony’s eyes.

\textit{Higher full house} was the call and Le Chiffre looked pretty smug.

Tony leant into Bond’s side playing the angle of the vapid pretty boy.  He didn’t have to act it too hard - he just remembered what cousin Crispin’s date would do.
He was smug too until Bond revealed his hand, damn, Tony would take back every comment had - the man could play Poker. He pulled Bond close. “Darling congratulations, we should celebrate.”

Tony waited until they were close enough that he could whisper in his ear. “We should go don’t you think?”

James couldn’t agree more. He’d just sat down with ten million and won one hundred and fifteen million in a poker hand. He was almost giddy if he was the type to indulge in that type of emotion. He went for the big distraction and for no other reason than he wanted to, he kissed Anthony soundly. “I say we should go back to our room to celebrate.”

Anthony didn’t blink he just smiled, slow and smug. “Let’s.”

Le Chiffre tried to interrupt. “Stay a while - you and paramour should try a new hand.”

James looked smug. “When you have someone this gorgeous willing to take you to bed, it’s rude to refuse.”

Tony didn’t want this to develop into a pissing contest, the idea was to get them out of the line of fire. Bond had managed to snatch all the money so there was no doubt that he had the terrorists attention. It was a question of what happened next?

James waited until they got back to their room. His radio link let him hear M loud and clear. “Well done Bond and don’t ruin this.”

He wasn’t stupid and didn’t need to ask what she was referring to. The kiss had been a little for show but their chemistry underlying the kiss was all too real. “Yes ma’am.”

Tony turned back to him. “So how do you feel?”

“Rich?” Bond offered with an added smirk. “If only for the day.”

Tony chuckled. “You know whoever gave you that chip on your shoulder should be shot.”
Bond shrugged. “MI6 would have no use for me if I wasn’t maladjusted.”

Tony pulled him closer. “That blonde bitch roofied your drink ... I am sure of it.”

Bond reeled Tony in by his tie. “Well, you certainly showed her ... Le Chiffre didn’t seem amused by it either.”

“Cheating bastard terrorist.”

Bond snorted. “They are not known for their honour, you know.”

Tony shrugged. “I was just making sure they knew not to mess with my man and I take my role seriously.”

James peeled off Tony’s jacket but didn’t remove the shoulder holster. They say when stripping you get to learn lots about the person with and you that is especially true now. There was humour in his voice. “I don’t remember being told treasury agents were armed.”

“I’m not just any treasury agent.” Tony said as an immediate rebuff.

James smirked. “No, you are not.” He didn’t stop unbuttoning the shirt, not quite ready to remove the shoulder holster and gun. What can he say? It was a kink of his.

The knock at the door stopped them, panting and mid strip - luckily they still had their trousers on. Tony growled as James opened it. He checked, it was a goon but better to open the door and control the situation then have them shoot indiscriminately through the door. Tony didn’t blink and had his gun out of his holster. James grinned as he opened the door. “Doesn’t your boss understand no means no.”

The goon sneered. “He wants you to reconsider or we are to harm your little boyfriend.”

Tony rolled his eyes because wow, way to go straight for the cliche. He decided to show how he felt about being called little. He felt the Walter Sig pistol staring the goon in the face with an unwavering grip would give them some clue. “I’m not little in any shape, way or form and I mind very much.”
James grinned looking like an idiot in love. The goons hissed and James sprang into action and in a few short moments - the idiot goons were sprawled on the ground in pain.

Tony growled. “Fuck this, the family has an apartment here ... Let’s go there.”

James smirked. “You don’t feel like getting dressed first?”

Tony looked down, he still had his trousers on and whilst his shirt was undone. “I have my trousers and my gun. Do I need to be anymore dressed?”

*James didn’t care about image or anything like it. He would serve queen and country and do it with a smile on his face but he was going to do everything possible to make Tony his.*
Tony did indeed have the mother of all secrets. He was married, not that anyone would believe him with the way he generally acted. It was all done as a part of a very carefully controlled act to throw off suspicion. The last thing he wanted was to make his husband’s life any more difficult than it had to be - he was the power behind England.

You see, in Mycroft’s case - he wasn’t exaggerating. He didn’t want the flashy office, he wanted the real power to make a difference. As a result, you tended to gain enemies, which is why neither of them professionally identified as being married. There was no reason to hand to your enemies gift-wrapped leverage against you on a plate after all.

Mycroft had for many years put off romantic entanglements, worried about getting too close to someone. Tony had crashed into his life rescuing mumsy and shooting his way out of a hostage situation. Mycroft had been even more impressed when he investigated the man and found that only six months earlier, Tony had suffered a pro-footballer career ending injury and in between torturous rehab sessions to ensure his ability to walk again, Tony had made great strides toward completing his masters.

Still, the whirlwind romance had continued when Mycroft’s enemies made the mistake of kidnapping Tony and Sherrinford. By the time Mycroft had tracked them down with Sherlock, they had found a sea of bodies with Tony standing guard over Q (god help you if you call him Sherrinford) who was promising unholy electronic revenge.

Sherlock had looked at the bodies with a feral grin. “I like this one Mycroft don’t lose him.”

“I don’t intend to.”

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He hadn’t lost Tony but with enemies circling close, Tony had headed over to America to work. It wasn’t difficult for him as he was born an American. The only trouble was the difficulty had taken a lot longer to sort out than anyone anticipated and Tony’s mask was starting to slip. He missed his
husband and their crazy family - and stolen moments were no longer helping him to maintain his focus.

He heard Q’s voice first and grinned. “Good god man, you said you were making Anthony safe, not forcing him to work in the sticks.”

Tony had to smile behind his coffee, he really did love his brother-in-law but he could be a fussy man if his world order was disturbed.

Mycroft rolled his eyes. “This is hardly the sticks little brother, it may not be MI6 but this isn’t a backward agency.”

Tony was going to find his brother-in-law the best scotch for Christmas, or better yet, wrap his Agent, James, in a bow and lock them in a room with a bed, lots of lube and plenty of condoms.

Vance stepped onto the work floor. “Mr. Holmes, it’s a pleasure to make your acquaintance.”

Tony figured Christmas had come early this year because there was no way that Sherlock was going to behave. Mycroft wouldn’t have brought him unless he wanted Sherlock to be rude. He decided to simply enjoy the upcoming show, he just wished he had a beer and some popcorn. “This is not the one, too simplistic. He likes to take things at face value Mycroft.”

Tony didn’t bother to bite back a curse. “Damn it, is it over or has someone blown the cover?”

Mycroft smirked. “Oh, you most certainly can come home, besides I think little brother would hack America if I didn’t take you back with us.”

Vance growled, toothpick twitching at the side of his mouth. “What do you mean I accept things at face value?”

Sherlock smirked. “I don’t think I used overly complicated language did I?”
“No brother, but no one likes it when their shortcomings are announced,” Mycroft explained.

Sherlock rolled his eyes. “So who went digging in your personnel file in the layers they were not supposed to?”

He posed it as a question but Sherlock was looking for the person’s reactions to give him away. It was a favourite trick of his and one Tony had used to great effect himself. Low and behold, someone gave themselves away.

“You work with terrible snoops Anthony.” Sherlock deduced.

Tony snorted. “Yeah, and it has taken them too long to figure out I am not the character I play. Oh well, too sad that they won’t get the answers they wanted.”

McGee pouted. “How do you know that I didn’t hack the answers I wanted?”

Tony shook his head in disbelief as he’d just admitted to breaking the rules - not that Tim thought that far ahead. “You went up against Little Brother and he is the reason you cannot hack MI6 either.”

Sherrinford look was one of pure disdain. “You thought you could out hack me? That is precious.”

Tony was a professional so he wouldn’t laugh but both he and Mycroft had mirth in their eyes. Vance was pinching his nose trying not to lose his cool as that would not do well for his reputation - what he also needed to do was get them away from general hearing range. This show had quickly become way more important than any type of work they were supposed to be doing.

“Let’s take this to the meeting room.”

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It was interesting how people sat around the circular table. Gibbs sat to the side of McGee, Ziva and Vance and Tony sat with the Holmes. Tony was clearly drawing his line in the sand and it wasn’t on the side of NCIS.

Somewhere between the bullpen and the meeting room, a thick gold band had appeared on Tony’s finger. There was only one connotation anyone could assume from a thick gold band on wedding finger.

Ziva said it first. “YOU’RE MARRIED!”

Tony grinned. “For ten years,” it turns out the truth was quite refreshing.

Ziva shook her head. “No, I would have known when I ...”

There was no love lost between the British Government and the David family. So Mycroft decided to add his two cents into the speech. “When you profiled the team for Ari to breakdown?”

She flushed at the reminder as she had worked hard to be accepted and hated when anyone dared to remind the team. “Your husband is a pig who flirts and dates indiscriminately.”

Sherlock smirked at her. “It is like you always say Myc’ they pick for brawn over brains in Mossad.”

Mycroft sat back and just looked at Ziva but she felt hunted and petty and she hated it. Her world view was crashing down around her ears and she wasn’t too sure why. “My dear, don’t put your petty insecurities into our relationship, we have been a partnership for over fifteen years and you think that you can trivialise what we have?”

Tony grinned crooked and in love. “No matter what any of them think I don’t care. I played the role like you asked to stay safe but I am done playing!”
Mycroft squeezed his hand. “And I am done sharing ... It is time to go home.”

Tony nodded and looked back at the Director. “Director Vance, I quit. I would ask that in lieu of time or back pay. We can agree that my contract ends here and now.”

Vance had many questions but he wasn’t stupid enough to pit himself against the Holmes family. “That would be agreeable.”

McGee wasn’t thinking. “What? That’s it?”

Gibbs shook his head. “Yes that is it. Why do you think you have a right to hack your team mates records and know their private life?”

McGee flushed because there was no moral high ground here and he was smart enough to know he was on dicey ground here. “Guess not.”

Gibbs growled. “You try that shit on me again McGee and I will beat your ass so bad that Vance won’t have to worry about firing you.”

Jethro looked at Tony and knew he needed to get this right. He had his rules and the big one was you don’t waste good. “Stay in touch.”

“We’ll visit you, Jethro.” Tony promised, the implication being that they wouldn’t be doing the same for the others.

“Good.”

He didn’t say anything else as this was not the forum and he wouldn’t let it become one. The Holmes and Tony left to clear out his desk but none of the tension in the room disappeared.

Vance whirled around. “Did you know?”
“That he was married no. I never needed to know as it didn’t affect his ability to do his job. I made no secret that I thought he was the best young agent I worked with.”

_It didn’t matter now though and somehow that annoyed Vance more. Damn it, there went his last toothpick of the day and he still had five hours._
If anyone asked Tony what his type was - Snarky, smart and candid were his favourite things. It might not be what most would look for but he wasn’t everyone. Tony was at the Navy mixer dressed in a tux as Madam Director had demanded he attend, something about making the Agency look good.

So as a result, Tony was bored stiff making stilted conversation. This was not his idea of fun but he did have to smirk at the conversation he could overhear.

“Why on Earth do I have to be here?”

His companion, a Colonel, rolled his eyes. “You know why McKay, now smile and try not to eviscerate anyone to the point they cry!”

This McKay looked non-plussed. “But I thought you said I could have fun?”

Tony swept in. “Well at least you are looking to have fun.”

Tony watched as he was sized up and he caught the flash of arousal on the guy’s face. He could work with that. The man spoke with a smirk obviously aiming for a reaction. “Please tell me that you are not part of the repressed armed forces?”

Tony smirked. “Oh, there is nothing repressed about me ... So how are you going to entertain me ...”

Rodney took the opportunity to introduce himself. “I am Dr. Rodney McKay, a scientist not a quack doctor. And who are you apart from lighting up this otherwise boring party?”

Tony held his hand out. “Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo. NCIS.”

Rodney nodded. “So you are the ones called in when the Navy and Marines misbehave.”

“That’s us.”

Rodney smirked. “Hey Sheppard. Why don’t we have an Agent Afloat for our crazy marines?”
Sheppard turned back from his conversation. “Are you flirting?”

Rodney shrugged. “Don’t get crabby if you’ve not found someone this hot to talk to.”

Tony snorted at the compliment even if it was delivered to someone else. “Well, how about you talk to me instead and we’ll make your friend happy as you won’t make anyone cry.”

Sheppard sent up a prayer of hope that this Agent could distract Rodney.

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Tony walked into the office the next day to smirks and he smirked right back. He loved geniuses as they applied their brain to all things including sex. It sucked that Rodney worked so far away but he promised to stay in touch and Tony was content to try.

“So how was your evening?”

Tony smirked at McGee because the question was not being asked with genuine concern but rather as an unsubtle dig. Thankfully for the probie, he was too fucked out to care. “I met this delightful genius, Meredith, who rocked my world - all night long.”

Tony had not laughed when Rodney shared his true first name. Instead, Tony had taken the promise and the use of it as a way to shield their relationship with care.

McGee sneered. “Being good in bed doesn’t make them a genius.”

Tony smiled sweetly. “No the two Ph.D.’s are what qualify the genius statement.”

All of the team tried to get more details - all to their great frustration. No one got anything else, Tony received each email and stolen phone-call with joy.

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In the mountain Colonel Carter was looking at the Atlantean pair with suspicion. “He hasn’t insulted anyone?”

Sheppard grinned knowing the reason for it. “Nope. He is in love.”

Rodney rolled his eyes. “It is too soon for that and being in Atlantis will put a dampener on things but yes, I am happy with who I met. I’m sorry Colonel but you’ve been replaced in my affections.”

Sam’s eyebrows rose to her head. She kind of liked Rodney now as a friend but she was well aware that he didn’t make the greatest first impression. She had to be worried about the security of the program. “Right ... Colonel?”

John knew what Carter was asking so responded dutifully. Rodney may be his best friend but he was the Military Commander of Atlantis and therefore had a responsibility to the security of the base. “His name is Agent Anthony DiNozzo, works for NCIS, doesn’t strike an immediate concern but I know that you will want to do a background check.”

It turns out he was legitimate and seemed to care for the scientist - so much so that the interrogation impressed O’Neill. To the point - he was asking the President about a potential agent afloat for Atlantis.

A year later, Rodney had gone through all the rigmarole of getting out of the mountain. He was cheating, intending to use the Daedalus to beam him to Tony. Well, close to Tony - he had no intention of breaking his NDA.

Rodney used the time he was having his exit-medical to make sure he hadn’t brought back anything exotic from the Pegasus Galaxy to check his earth messages. He opened the one from Tony first and having read it, immediately started cussed out everyone.

“How the hell did that seem like a good idea?” Rodney asked the question rhetorically but knew someone would ask which would be a perfect excuse to vent.

Dr. Lam interrupted his rant. “What’s the matter?”

“My boyfriend decided to jump into the Pontiac to rescue his boss and witness.”
Lam was frowning as the vehemence wasn’t what she expected. “Okay, some might say that was a heroic thing, McKay.”

McKay shook his head. “I’ve never doubted his heroism ... He is stupidly brave rather like Sheppard. Wait, I never want them to meet and influence each other - that would be bad. Damn idiot. He can’t afford to tax his lungs like that after the plague.”

Lam’s eyes rose to her head. “The plague?”

Rodney had freaked out when Tony had told him but got over it seeing he was alive. He’d directed the scientists on Atlantis to look at potential lung therapies as a way to try help, Tony.

Lam could see the worry. “Let me talk to Vala and see if the general would allow a visit.”

If there was ever a hint about how much Rodney cared it would be the lack of sarcasm in his heartfelt. “Thank you.”

Tony awoke from his treatment to see Abby sleeping in his chair. “Hey Gothgirl.”

She woke up with a smile on her face and ran forward to gently kiss his cheek. She didn’t want to jostle him or damage his lungs any further considering he’d been hurt rescuing Gibbs. She loved Gibbs like a father but it didn’t seem fair that he was now okay and Tony was suffering in hospital.

“Thanks for rescuing him.” Abby didn’t need to mention Gibbs, she knew Tony would know who she was talking about.

Tony smiled as that was all his energy levels would allow. He used what energy he had to ask the most important question. “Is Mer’ home?”

Abby frowned, not sure if she had heard her friend correctly. “Tony?”

He coughed once again showing he wasn’t fully recovered but much better than he was. “He is supposed to be here this weekend. This sucks.”
Abby wanted to gasp as that was the most she’d gotten out of her friend about this mysterious lover. “I’m sure he’d be here.” She offered, hoping to offer some type of comfort to her struggling friend. A voice interrupted them,

“HERE! Of course I am here you stupid fool of a man.”

Abby was about to square off against the person calling her friend an idiot when she saw Tony grin. It stopped her in her tracks because this was not his placate the witness smile, this was, full on Tony DiNozzo effect. The smile that could blind and make men and women stop in the street.

“Love you too Mer’.”

Abby sized him up. “So you are the one who swept our Tony off his feet?”

McKay rolled his eyes. “I am not sure who swept who but god it was a much better end to the night than that boring reward evening.”

Tony grinned weakly because he agreed with everything that Rodney said. Rodney kept on blustering through. “So some of my people will be coming here and when they do I am afraid that you dear little Goth will need to leave.”

Abby scowled. “Hey now, I have been here since Tony was admitted.”

Rodney rolled his eyes. “This is not a competition but I have access to materials that can heal him fully ... But you do not have the clearance. Are you willing to let your stubbornness be the cause of him not recovering.”

Abby’s face fell at even the thought that she could be the cause. “I will leave but the jury is out on you Mister. You might make Tony smile but you are seriously rude.”

Tony whispered. “I like him that way.”

Rodney didn’t even bother trying to hide his smug grin. He wasn’t too sure why someone as gorgeous as Tony would want him but he was too smart to tell him to leave. “Bye Gothgirl.”

Tony sighed as Abby flounced away. “You had way too much fun there.”
Rodney snorted. “Oh babe, I have a list of all the things I want to say to your coworkers if I meet them. They should be glad that I no longer work for the CIA, I used to express my displeasure there with a car bomb.”

Tony pouted. “Stop being so hot when I haven’t got the energy to do anything about it.”

Rodney hated hearing things like that because he knew how fit and health crazy Tony was. He wasn’t naive enough to the think that the universe was fair but it had some crappy karma. “I do need you to sign a crazy amount of forms and then I have permission to try a procedure to help you.”

Tony wasn’t sure where this was going but he trusted Rodney so he signed form after form. His arm was tired after signing his life away once again to the government. His security clearance had to be high for the MCRT but this was way above that - so whatever the secret was it was bound to be amazing and crazy.

Rodney lay on the bed next to Tony and told him the most fantastical tale. Tony didn’t deny any part of it because he could see the truth of it in his lover’s eyes even if it was crazy. “So now the door is locked I am going to ask Vala to drop in.”

Tony shrugged because it was not like he was going anywhere at the moment. He would just like to stop coughing and be able to drag Rodney to a proper bed.

The next thing Tony knew a beautiful dominatrix appeared by his bed in what looked like a Star Trek transporter job. “Hello.”

Vala grinned back. “Why do you always know beautiful people McKay? And Carter said this one is yours?”

Tony smirked. “And he is mine.”

Vala pouted. “And you won’t share will you McKay?”

Rodney snorted. “Not on your life and I don’t think even between the both of us we could handle you.”

Vala grinned at that assessment as it was probably true. “You may be right but still I hate to see such prettiness struggling when I can help.”
Tony just said. “What do you need me to do?”

Vala had a wicked grin on her face. “Lay back and think of Rodney and I will do the hard work.”

Tony looked at Rodney and he just nodded so Tony did as he was bid. He lay back on the bed and thought about all the things that he’d just learnt. He could tell Vala was standing over him and there was some type of metal device on her hand and it was glowing. He would think it was space age but he knew the exact truth.

The device made his torso feel warm but he could feel a loosening in his chest. He could breathe easier but it kept going. He didn’t want to get his hopes up but he felt like his lungs were getting healed but that would be too much.

A little after a two minutes had passed when Vala’s hands dropped. “Well handsome, how do you feel?”

Tony was stunned but had to ask. “Like I could run in my pro days even with a dodgy knee.”

Vala smirked. “I didn’t fix the knee but if you come to work with us then I will see what I can do.”

Tony hadn’t even considered that aspect and was struck dumb by the idea. Rodney snickered. “I think you will find there is an offer in the works and O’Neill considers this an incentive.”

Tony wanted to laugh because hell, as incentives go, this one blew the FBI and Homeland out of the water. “We need me to check out so now awkward questions can be asked.”

Rodney nodded. “Agreed, I know you hate hospitals but would you let the doctor at the mountain check you out. For me?”

Tony threw his head back against the pillow. “Fine for you and you play dirty. I will remember this.”

Rodney shrugged because he was a genius - NCIS didn’t appreciate his Tony’s talents. All he needed to do was use an excuse to get him into the mountain. He knew Jack wouldn’t let him get away without joining the program.
Then the real fun would start when he would go back to NCIS to let them know about the transfer. Rodney wouldn’t lie, he was really looking forward to that part - he had a list of grievances to air with Director Vance and he would work his way downwards.

Now developed into an expanded story - [here](#)
Tony wondered just what the hell was going on. He’d been called to the New York branch of the FBI on request by the Deputy Director of the FBI. Morrow, his boss, had told him that he was going and he would be a credit to the agency and take advantage of the situation.

Tony had smiled, nodded and was relieved to get the hell away from Vivian Blackadder. Gibbs had not been so happy but he left Gibbs and Morrow to thrash out the details and he went to prepare.

“Where the hell are you going?”

Tony smiled sweetly. “New York. I’m being loaned out to your old agency.”

Vivian frowned. “Whatever for?”

Tony shrugged knowing for some reason the situation bothered her. He didn’t care if it did to be honest as she had nothing to do with his life. “No idea but I can’t wait to find out.”

New York hadn’t changed since the last time he was in the Big Apple. The Federal Building was part of Federal Plaza and Tony walked into the lobby. “I’m Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo. NCIS, I have a 10:30 meeting with SAC Peter Burke.”

The security guard nodded and phoned the White Collar crime division to confirm and having got the confirmation brought him through and had an intern take him to the required floor. Tony was met as soon as the lift opened by the Agent in question.

“Nice to meet ya, Peter Burke. If you will follow me.”

Tony shook the proffered hand. “Please to meet you, Anthony DiNozzo.”

Tony was showed into a standard conference room and was introduced to the team of White Collar. He listened and observed all of them as if this was where the team had their meetings then there was something was very wrong.
He’d taken a place - so someone wasn’t there. “So why have I been asked here?”

Burke laid it all out for him. There was a final member to the white collar team and it was a doozy. A world-renowned art thief was a smart addition to the team. “Keller has walked into the operation and is making life very difficult for Neal especially as he has come in working for Vincent Adler.”

Tony listened to all the pieces of information. They needed to extract Caffrey that much was obvious but it was how to do it safely that was being debated. “So your man is alive?”

Diana Berrigan, Burke’s second, explained. “Oh he is alive and he is transmitting. It is clear that Keller and Adler are toying with him.”

Tony could sympathise because he had been stuck in a few situations similar. “Is he good enough to adapt to a situation and roll with it?”

Burke nodded. “Neal would have never been caught if his girlfriend hadn’t messed with his head.”

Tony could hear the pride and worry in the Agent’s voice. Tony had an idea forming in his head, the FBI probably wouldn’t like it but they would have to go with it. “Is he homophobic at all?”

Burke shook his head. “Not at all, Diana would have killed him ... He appreciates beauty in all forms.”

Tony snorted. “Well in that case I need to call an old friend, and the FBI will have to leave him alone as you were stupid enough to let him get out the first time.”

Peter quirked an eyebrow as he was curious but not following the conversation. Tony sucked in a breath and settled his mind, he always needed all of his wits to talk to Don Salvatore Mancuso. You had to respect a Mafia boss who you sent to jail and they still respected you and in fact pushed through an adult adoption for you. Tony had been perplexed at the time because he’d been expecting death threats not an adoption. You see the Mafia boss felt that Tony’s ability to ‘dethrone’ him even if only temporarily showed he had the right ruthlessness to lead the family. He was allowed his childish rebellion of joining NCIS as it didn’t interfere with Mancuso business interests. Tony had done his best to explain it wasn’t a rebellion but the Head of the Family would just smile and say something condescending. Tony gave up using reason and tried to be as disgraceful as possible but so far everything was tolerated.
“Hey put father on the phone.” Tony said.

The Agents were all staring but Tony ignored them. “Luca you will put the father on, or, I am going to come over to Long Island and beat you stupid before dropping your carcass in the river ... if you are lucky.”

The team shivered as they believed every word coming out of the Agent’s mouth. He said it quietly but it was all the more menacing because of it - Just what was the Director thinking?

Tony smirked when a new voice could be heard. “Hello, you can do something for me but you will like it. You remember Vincent Adler? Do the Mancuso’s still have a vendetta? Well he is back in New York and he has something of mine.”

Tony shook his head. “No, he has my lover Neal Caffrey and I intend to retrieve him.”

Tony smiled. “You know I am gay and it has never been a problem. You should be pleased as Neal is a high class world Art Thief.”

The Agents were torn between horrified fascination and reaching for the cuffs. They were not sure what was going on but they knew one thing - Adler and Keller had bitten off more than they could chew.

Tony finished the call and seeing the looks of shock said. “What?”

Burke pinched his nose. “Did you just arrange for a Mob boss to help you collect Neal?”

Tony smirked. “Well I had him sent to prison and as punishment ... He adopted me. It is all very confusing and gives my bosses a headache but what can you do? It is usually an annoyance that I can do without but it does become useful on occasion.”

Diana laughed. “You just called Salvatore Mancuso father, and he is going to help you get Neal back?”
Tony nodded. “That is exactly what I am going to do. You see to deal with a bastard like Adler you need to find a bigger one. Please, tell me if you know someone else that could fit the bill. I am listening.”

Peter shook his head. “No, the director said that you were the best in the business and would find a solution. It is unorthodox but I can see it working. There is also a part of me that is intrigued when you and Neal meet.”

A day later and Tony was waltzing into the apartment where Neal was being forced to stay. Vincent Adler was standing there smarmily and he didn’t like the way he was staring at Neal - like he was a possession. “Charmed to meet you.”

Tony put on his polite smile. “Charmed.”

So they had got the polite falsehoods out of the way - now was when they did serious business. He had two of the Mancuso enforcers with him. He had to, as father had insisted and he wasn’t going to turn away well trained back-up.

Tony sat down on the chair with the natural born arrogance you would expect of a Mafia prince because despite never talking about it, he could easily be one. This case was evidence in point that Mancuso hadn’t give up the hope that he would be the next Head of the Family.

“So what can I do for the Mancuso family today?” Adler asked sitting back, honestly, this guy was a walking talking cliche. He was one white cat away from being a Bond Villain.

“Well I was just telling Peter and Clint here, how I wanted my Neal back.” Tony said it with a smile
but it could create an iceberg for all the warmth in it.

Neal had to use all of his skills not to freeze but he took the cue he was given. This guy was sent by Peter and if to get out of the room he was this guy’s lover, well, it was hardly going to be a hardship. The man was suave, confident, clearly intelligent, and understood good suits. Plus he was extremely hot. Neal itched to paint him if he was being honest to himself. It was a good sign that he was something like art and not just how he was going to survive.

Neal smiled. “It is so good to see you baby.”

Tony smirked. “You still need to give me my birthday gift ... You promised to paint me.”

Adler could see the chemistry between the pair. He had no idea that Antoni had come back to the fold and it was well known in criminal circles that he was the most ruthless of the sons. He had to be as he was adopted and heir apparent. There were rumours that he was the reason Salvatore Mancuso had spent time in prison so when he’d been released all had watched what would happen. “Your father is not too happy with me.”

Antoni smiled but it was all teeth. “You know it is not my father you have to worry about.” Turning to one of his shadows he asked “What did I tell you yesterday when I asked you to put father on the phone?”

His guard repeated dutifully. “You would beat me stupid before dropping my carcass in the river ... if I was lucky.”

Tony snorted. “Well I didn’t add concrete shoes or use the Don’s favoured method ... He likes to shoot your knees out and then drop you in the river in concrete boots.”

Neal was watching the verbal foreplay going back and forth. He had never seen Adler scared of anyone but this new player scared him. It wasn’t surprising considering it was Antoni Mancuso sitting in front of him. Neal was a bit confused as to why Peter would sent a Mafia prince in after him but beggars could not be choosers. Neal felt brave enough to slide over to Antoni and risk hugging him.
“I just want to get out of here and celebrate your birthday like we promised.” It was said in a tone that suggested everything that was dirty and oh so right in the world.

Adler’s eyes glazed a little at even the hint, so much so that Tony really wanted to punch the guy on the principle of the matter. He had to remind himself that as soon as they were free and clear the FBI would swoop in on the bastard. Salvatore was not too happy until Tony had explained that Adler would be placed in a prison with several of his more dangerous enemies. “Neal and I had some unfinished business to discuss.”

Tony stood up, gently tugging on Neal’s hand to get him to stand at the same time. “Consider all unfinished business null and void and be grateful that I persuaded Don Mancuso that I should retrieve my lover.”

Adler pouted. “I am not sure he is you know, because for lovers your reunion has been very chaste.”

Tony upgraded punching to any excuse to shoot the bastard. Still he could play the game and use the shock to extricate him and Neal quickly. He pulled Neal quickly and with a smirk and a challenging glint planted his lips on Neal’s. It was necessary but Neal was used to taking advantage of even the smallest opening and gave it his all. He left little biting kisses against Antoni’s lips and moaned when his mouth was invaded by a questing tongue. Neal was more turned on than he had ever been in his life.

Tony reluctantly broke the kiss and turned back to Adler and Keller. “That will have to be enough for your voyeuristic tendencies and now we will be leaving and anyone who tries to stop us will be put down my by fathers guards. I am done playing games.”

Neal was pulled through the door and down the elevator and waited for the penny to drop. The thing was, no one stopped them, and Keller despite glaring at them didn’t follow. He was safe and free and noted there were two cars waiting for them on street level. The first held an infamous figure who stepped out of his car. “Your Neal is safe.”

Tony nodded. “He is thanks to you and I have him on tenterhooks and that is before the police raid.”

Salvatore smiled. “Well I have business to attend to and you will come to family dinner with Neal next Sunday ... I don’t think that is too much to ask for.”

Tony hated the idea as he always tried to keep the family at a distance as it was kind of everything he wanted when it came to family. The law breaking was the sticking point and it hadn’t gone
unnnoticed that since he came out of prison Salvatore seemed to be making an effort to civilise the family. Tony couldn’t say no because without his help and name, the operation to retrieve Neal would have been far riskier and dangerous.

“We’ll arrange something.” Tony agreed.

Neal watched the Don leave and then Tony led him to another car where much to his surprise Peter and Diana were there with recording equipment. His grin was back. “Oh boy am I glad to see you.”

Peter hugged him and Diana just smirked at him. “So how did you find meeting Agent DiNozzo?”

Neal blinked in shock trying to reconcile what he’d just witnessed with the information he’d learnt. “You are not FBI because they would have a fit at your familial connections.”

Tony snickered. “Actually they keep trying to recruit me. I have yet to say yes and they seem willing to overlook them. It helps that I was the one to send Pops to jail and it wasn’t my fault that the incompetent prosecutor didn’t put him away for life.”

Neal snorted. “Well thank you for my life and it is a pleasure to meet you, Agent DiNozzo.”

Tony smirked. “We’ve kissed I think you can call me Tony and after the debrief we really should grab a coffee or two.”

Neal was reeling with how quickly things were moving but the Agent in front of him fascinated him and he wanted to strip back every layer both physically and in terms of character and learn everything about this intriguing man.

Neal would still be trying twenty years later but he loved every minute.
What Price? (James Wilson)

Wilson had no intention of going out this evening but when Dr. Gregory House was your best friend you found yourself dragged out potentially on any day that ended with a y. He was sad because he had ended his relationship with a woman he thought could be wife number four.

He was being ridiculous and maudlin and alcohol was bound to improve his disposition (House’s words, not his). Hence, why he was being dragged to a bar.

“Why am I here?” James asked House.

“You need a drink if only to stop your whining.”

Wilson rolled his eyes. “Thanks House, good to know that I can always rely on my best friend for sympathy.” He added none too subtle with his sarcasm.

House’s response was an inelegant snort as he ordered two more shots. “If you wanted that you should have gone to Cuddles. What you need is alcohol and a one-night stand so for tonight I am your wingman.”

Wilson couldn’t help his retort. “You are not suggesting hookers? Do you feel okay?”

House smirked. “No, I know how your sensibilities get on things like that.”

Wilson did smile at that. “I am so sorry my moral sensibilities get in the way of you having a good time.”

House shrugged it off. “I just wait until you’re gone and phone one if I’m bored.”

James was staring at the bar. The guy at the bar was hot in all the right ways. He had gorgeous eyes, a crinkling smile and his jeans fit his ass in all the right ways. House broke his musings. “Someone
caught your attention Jimmy boy?”

Wilson shook his head. “No House. Just my mind is wandering.”

House was like a dog with a juicy bone so there was no way he was going to let this drop. “Yeah - on the hot cop at the bar.”

Wilson frowned in intrigue. “How did you get cop?”

House rolled his eyes because his friend was a genius in his field of oncology but his observational skills needed some work, plus he could be clueless about matters of the heart. “The badge on his jeans and the gun in a shoulder holster. You may have missed it with all the staring at his ass you’ve been doing.”

Wilson frowned because he expected way more comments from House - he tended to go extra outrageous in a bid to get him out of his funk. “No comments.”

House shook his head. “Nope, he is hot and I would so take him for a spin if I was that way inclined but alas I am not. Go for it. You never know - you may have more luck with a man than you’ve had so far with women.”

“I love women.” He said almost reflexively.

House could not resist that opening. “Yes and if you could just settle one relationship before falling in love with another then you would be fine. That’s unfair, this last bitch was just whiny. Hey, plus side, Hot Cop has a gun and will shoot you if your eyes stray.”

Wilson snorted but knew he’d get nowhere just staring, whilst sitting next to House. “Wish me luck.”

House watched intrigued because whilst he knew his friend swung both ways - he’d never seen him go after a male. Wow, his boy was smooth and the cop hadn’t rejected him out of hand. In fact, he was listening to Wilson. The temptation to mess with his friend was extreme but that would defeat the purpose of the exercise. So he was going to exit in his own style, he slid up next to Jimmy
clapped him on the back. “Well, I am going to leave you to get to know hot cop better. I hear hookers Vicodinodin calling my name.”

The cop didn’t raise to the bait which impressed him. In fact as House was walking away all he heard was hot cop saying. “That is some friend you have there.”

Wilson sighed. “Oh, he gets better or worse depending on who you ask.”

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Tony watched the other man walk out the door. “So now your minder is gone. What do you want to do?”

Wilson smiled, tentative and a little shy. “I would love to go somewhere quieter.”

Tony smirked. “I know just the place. Come on, take a walk with me.”

Wilson got his coat. “So do I get a name or do I just keep calling you Hot Cop in my mind?”

The smile he got for the compliment made it worthwhile. “I don’t mind that nickname but, I’m Agent Anthony DiNozzo, NCIS, but please call me, Tony.”

“James Wilson. MD. So now we know each other’s names let’s see what else we can find out.”

Tony grinned and motioned with his arm towards a street. “I found this place my first night in Princeton.”

James could admit to being impressed as the bar was an old blues bar. You could easily fall in love with the atmosphere in this place and the company. “Good taste.”
“Of course I have, I started talking to you didn’t I?” Tony said with such ease and confidence that James couldn’t help but smile.

The drinks were flowing and at one point Tony had even commandeered the piano to play a song for James. The applause was deafening, Tony had bowed and just gone back to James. “So what brought your mopey self out to the bar tonight.”

“My friend, House trying to be helpful.” Was all James could say without sounding pathetic. He tried to deflect the attention back. “How about you?”

Tony smiled ruefully. “I have an offer to take over the precinct here at Princeton. It would mean a big change so it has me thinking.”

Wilson was more than happy to let Tony talk out his problems, maybe it was the Doctor in him. “So walk me through the problem.”

Tony was cautious. “Are you sure you want to go down that rabbit hole? I would kind of like a second date.”

James did chuckle at that. “Well unless you confess to being a secret Dexter like killer I think we’ll be okay.”

Tony shrugged because he could do with a sounding board only didn’t he trust anyone in Washington to be objective. “I used to think of my team as a family but recent months have shown me their true colours. Team dynamics are just getting worse no matter what I do and whilst I’m not the type to slink away with my tail between my legs, neither can I tolerate the behaviour I’m being forced to put up with by my boss from those who are technically my subordinates. I think I should leave but it bothers me as I’ve never spent longer than two years in a place before NCIS. I thought I’d found a home there.”

James listened to what was being said and more importantly, to what was not being said. “From what I understand this sort of thing can have fairly severe consequences for you guys when you’re out in the field. So I guess you have to ask yourself are they worth not only the risks out there but also your self-respect and is it a price you’re willing to pay?”

Tony looked up like he’d had a revelation. He had never thought of it in that way, for too long he’d
been the one trying to keep the ‘family’ together and as a reward, they tried to tear him down and remind that he wasn’t Gibbs. So why *should* he stay around?

“You know you don’t pull any punches?” Tony said but with a smile on his face letting James know it was okay what he said.

Wilson shrugged. “I don’t think you would want me to.”

Tony shook his head. “No, I didn’t. Now let’s talk about more fun things.”

Wilson smiled at the change in subject, he was happy because he sensed Tony had what he needed. “Well I was going to ask what would be an ideal date?”

Tony quirked his head. “I think you should surprise me.”

“So we are agreed this was one?” James had to check, he was rusty and he liked Tony so didn’t want to blow it.

“Yeah Doc. I will need to take care of a few things but I will be back on Saturday.”

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Tony had waited until late the next day to ring back the police commissioner and explain that he would be accepting the offer to become Captain DiNozzo. When asked what made him say yes Tony smiled as he said it. “I had a conversation that reminded me I needed to go back to what I am, which is a damn good honest cop.”

The Commissioner wouldn’t crow but he was extremely pleased and he knew the rest of the board would be as well. “Well then, welcome to the New Jersey Police Department.”

Now all he had to do was go back to NCIS and explain what was happening. This was not going to be fun in the least but Tony didn’t care. For the first time in so long he felt like a huge weight had been lifted of him. He was done living for other people and even if this thing with James didn’t work
out, he would still have a fresh start and that counted for a lot.

Tony was in the office early and on the phone to the director’s secretary. “Hey Cynthia, can I get five minutes with Madame Director?”

Tony was glad that it would still be early when he could have the meeting. “Why are you in early? That won’t impress Gibbs.”

Tony rolled his eyes as he wasn’t facing McGee but he answered the snotty question. “To do the work that needs to be done, you should know, like the four reports you owe that are stopping sign off by JAG.”

“It’s your fault that they are not done.” McGee added with a sneer. Wow, little probbie was trying to play with big boys and Tony didn’t care.

“Is that so?” Tony asked with a quiet voice, McGee was suddenly wary of the cold tone. Good.

“Yeah, I mean if you want them done you should finish them shouldn’t you.” McGee tried with a yawn. The book deal was taking a lot more out of him than he thought.

Tony snickered with disbelief because Jesus, this didn’t need a wake up call - he needed an intervention. Tony stood up to his full height. “Let me make one thing clear. I am still your SFA and I will not act like your secretary ever. It is your responsibility to complete those reports and everyday they are not done past midday I will write you up for it. You need to decide if you are an agent or an author. Personally I don’t care which but while you’re here do your damn job.”

Tony finished as he strode up the steps up to the Director’s office. It was funny, even though he had no doubts about his decision, that little exchange had reinforced his conviction that he needed to go.

“Where are you going?” McGee shouted.

Tony smiled and it was his genuine killer smile. “To resign.”

“TONY!” No doubt he was calling the cavalry but Tony was laughing. He could disappear before
they even figured out their plan of action. He was polite and professional, he wrote each of them a letter explaining his reasons although he had no doubt they would try twisting the reasons and blame him but Tony simply didn’t give a shit anymore.

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Jenny was sitting behind her desk. “How can I help you today Tony?”

Tony sighed because he liked her but this was about his career as well as how he was being treated by the rest of the MCRT. “I need to hand you my resignation letter.”

Well that got her attention. “Oh, why?”

Tony shrugged. “I am a good cop and I know I can lead but I am done playing a role to make everyone feel better. McGee and Ziva both feel like they have more intelligence and should be SFA, well good luck to them when they realise neither is eligible due to their masters or lack thereof. They were both nightmares to work with when I had to lead them and I picked up the slack to make sure the solve rate didn’t drop.”

Jenny was quick to reassure him. “And it didn’t.”

Tony smiled. “I know because I worked at it, then when Gibbs came back and dumped my stuff back on my desk the others treated that as an evaluation of me as a leader and are being insubordinate little twits. McGee told me that I should finish his reports myself if I wanted them done soon.”

Jenny frowned at that, not liking what she was hearing. Gibbs was supposed to be leading this team. What the hell was he doing? For the first time, she was regretting letting him return. “Surely we can find you another position. How about Rota?”

Tony shook his head. “No ma’am but thank you. I took a long hard look at myself and I didn’t like what I saw. It’s not all on the others, as I let myself be used and I forgot that at my core I am a cop. I want to go back to that. I need to go back to that”

She sighed. “I’m sorry to see you go but I know the futility of trying to keep someone by coercion. You were a great asset to the Agency and you will be missed. Do you have a role lined up?”
Tony smiled. “I have accepted Police Captain for the Princeton precincts.”

Jenny was annoyed but she could adjust her plans. There was always a risk of asking DiNozzo to go after Benoit but maybe she could use McGee’s anger to get him to do it. If she was going to do that then she needed Tony far away from Washington as he would pick up on the signs. She would give him one last gift. “You have a ridiculous amount of vacation time saved up. What if I say that you can leave today in lieu of back pay?”

Tony let out a sigh of relief. He knew that today was going to suck so bad. He regretted telling McGee he was leaving and he had no doubt the word was already spreading. The longer he stayed meant the longer he would have to run the guilt and anger gauntlet. “That would be appreciated Ma’am.”

Jenny shook his head. “No Captain DiNozzo, thank you.”

He left with a sheepish grin and headed down to HR, she would phone down to make sure his exit paperwork was started.

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The Ducklings of House were slowly being driven insane by their boss. “You want me to what?” Dr. Cameron asked just checking.

“I need you to spill your feelings to find out if Jimmy scored with the Hot Cop at the bar. He has been secretive all week, and smiley, and I want to know why.” House explained.

Chase rolled his eyes and asked his question even knowing it was futile. “Have you tried asking your best friend?”

House snorted. “You have met me?”
Foreman shook his head. “How about we focus on the patient we need to cure?”

“You’re no fun.” House said, sticking his tongue out. You would never believe House was the boss of them all.

Later that day, Allison actually caught a clue when the door was open between House’s and Wilson’s office. Wilson was talking on his mobile phone.

“You okay?” Wilson was asking, concern evident in his voice.

Whatever was said in return. “You just have to get through the week and then you have our date to look forward to. “

So yeah it sounded serious and Cameron made up her mind that she wouldn’t say a damn thing to her boss until Wilson decided he was ready to say something himself.

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Tony found a stairway to phone James. “Well I am making Princeton my new home so you better be ready.”

“You resigned.”

Tony grinned hearing the joy in James’ voice. “I did - so we can celebrate my new job on Saturday as well. Any hint on where we’re going?”

“DINOZZO!”

Tony sighed and he was even more glad that he’d managed to sneak a quick phone call with James.
“I gotta go and talk sense into Gibbs. I’ll call you back and let you know how the guilt and anger gauntlet goes.”

“I’m at the end of the phone whenever you need a friendly voice.”

James didn’t know how much of an anchor Tony was using that fact.

“Who was that on the phone?” Gibbs demanded to know.

Tony looked up at the question. “You can ask, but I have no obligation to answer Gibbs.”

Gibbs growled. “McGee said you’ve resigned, why? I say when you leave the team.”

Tony chuckled and he was so glad Jenny had pushed the exit paperwork through today as it meant that it would be only one day he would have to put up with this crap. “No, you don’t. I am a grown ass adult and can do what I please. You’re my boss, not God.”

Huh, he didn’t realise how good that would feel to say. “This is not over,” Gibbs said.

Tony smirked. “I’ve already accepted a job and unless you end up crossing paths with the New Jersey PD it is.”

Gibbs sneered. “What, going back to being a Detective? It’s a waste of your talents.”

Now that got Tony chuckling. “Wow, that is the first positive review of my performance you’ve given in two years. And no Gibbs, it will be Captain DiNozzo.”

Gibbs sighed, hearing a finality that not even his stubbornness could beat. “Where did we go wrong?”
DiNozzo shrugged. “I don’t know but I will never regret being your SFA, no matter how much of a bastard you’ve been but I owe it to myself to see where this goes.”

Gibbs wouldn’t say sorry as it was against rules but he did deflect the tantrum trio from harassing him too much throughout the day. So Tony would take that in lieu of an apology as it was far more practical.

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Tony had spent most of the day shifting and unpacking boxes so he was more than ready to unwind. He had changed into his best black jeans and simple black shirt, he topped it off with the tan leather jacket and boots. He was dressed to impress and James was worth it.

Tony was using a rental and it was a sweet corvette. He could afford it and was treating himself and sped off in the direction of Princeton Plainsboro. He had promised Jimmy that he would meet him at the hospital.

He followed the signs pointing him in the direction of oncology and ignored the odd look he got. Well, he managed to ignore looks and comments until he got a shout of. “HOT COP!”

Tony remembered that voice, it belonged to James best friend. “Hello Dr. House, have you seen Jimmy?”

House smirked. “Should I be giving you the shovel speech?”

Tony rolled his eyes. “You are welcome to try but I would caution you with threatening a Police Captain.”

House pouted. “Well, you are no fun.”

Tony flashed a wicked smile and one of the nurses passing by walked into a wall. House just rolled
his eyes but did grin at Tony’s retort. “I’m a lot of fun but only for James.”

James had just entered his office and heard the end of the conversation, he went from impatient to grinning at the way Tony could keep up with House. He hadn’t missed the way House’s ducklings had their noses almost pressed to the glass that separated their offices. For smart doctors, they could be stunningly childish, James figured it was House’s influence.

Hearing Tony’s promise that he almost purred out James could admit that his arousal spiked in a way that he didn’t want House to stick around to witness. He did interject. “Well, well, promises, promises.”

If Tony’s smile before was friendly, upon seeing Wilson it was a knock out. Jesus, House could see Nurses and some of the Doctors fritzing whenever Jimmy’s boyfriend came to visit.

Still, House approved of this one of Jimmy’s conquests. Hot Cop wouldn’t break Wilson’s heart and could keep up with House’s sarcasm.

Yeah, House could see this date being the first of many - Hell they better not expect him to play nice at their wedding because he could see that in their not too distant future as well. He looked forward to some interesting verbal sparring matches in the future and walked off in the direction of Cuddy’s office to make bet’s about future husband number one.
Chapter Summary

Gibbs was unsure if he could forgive Morrow, but his partner sure did amuse him on occasion.

Kate and Vivian were fanning themselves and talking, well, gossiping about something. Gibbs hated when they went into girly mode because it was enough to make him want to shoot something. Although, having been married as many times as he had, Gibbs was smart enough not to voice that opinion.

“Did you see that guy?” Kate said, her voice a little breathy, which was plain odd to hear. Todd was more the plain-talking straight-laced type at work.

Viv smirked at her workmate. “You mean GQ who breezed through the office like there was no one who could compete with him?”

Ah, now Gibbs understood who they meant and he shared a smirk with Stan, who just sighed catching on to who the girls were gossiping about at the same time. Poor Stan, he would never get the same looks as young Anthony would.

“Agent Blackadder, Agent Todd, am I paying you to gossip?” Gibbs said sharply, his voice promising he would happily unleash his inner bastard.

They both flushed but Kate recovered first. “I have the financials you asked for.”

Viv was always the boldest of his agents. “Do you know who walked up to the Director’s office?”

Gibbs smirked because if his agents hadn’t learnt to ask the right questions then he refused to give them pointers. “Yes I do, now get back to work.”

Gibbs smirked the whole way up the Director’s office and tapped on it. “So you just had to cause a stir at the office, didn’t you Tony?”
Tony looked up from his takeaway. “I have no idea what you are talking about Jethro. Pull up a chair and listen to how good your team is at investigating.”

“Our recording them?” Gibbs asked, vexed that none of the Agents had picked up the bug he must have dropped.

Tony smirked at his friend and was only too happy to explain what he did. “They were so busy staring at my ass in these jeans, Burley included, they missed the rubbish I dropped in the waste bin.”

Gibbs shook his head in exasperation as he took the coffee offered. He looked at Tom and just had to say. “Of all the Agents you could have started dating, it had to be Tony. You knew I wanted him for my team.”

Tony snickered at Gibbs’ expression. “Hey you know it was my fault, I wore Tom down and we’re happy. Accept it and move on Mr. Grumpy.”

Gibbs sighed. “Accepted it as I have no choice and at least you bring good food and coffee as penance.”

Tony smirked. “And besides Homeland turned out to be a better fit for my skills.”

Gibbs rolled his eyes. “Yeah, and you live to give the SecNav a fit every time you accompany Tom to an award evening.”

Tony smirked because the current SecNav was both the reason why he and Tom were together and also the reason why he never joined NCIS in the end. It was all SecNav’s fault, and he was bitter each time the Homeland Director gleefully reminded him.

The radio was recording the conversations. “Come on Burley, you know something. I saw the look you shared with Gibbs.”

“Rule Four,” Stan said with glee in his voice to Blackadder.

Tony and Gibbs both snickered and Tony had to add. “And you said he had no backbone!”

Gibbs rolled his eyes. “It took you telling him to speak up.”
Tony shrugged. “Some people just need a push in the right direction.”

Tom knew that comment was directed at him. He’d liked Tony from the very start but thought at twenty years his senior, he had no business chasing the younger man. It had been Tony who had dissuaded him of that opinion with a very vocal, and then very physical demonstration of why his notion was stupid.

Tony smirked unrepentant at his lover and added, “And aren’t you glad I gave you that push?”

It was as close as they would come to discussing their relationship at one of their places of work. “Every damn day.”

Tony grinned, incandescent for a brief second before getting up. “Well, lunchtime is over. I better get back to the grindstone.”

Morrow uncaring of Gibbs being in the room pecked his lover on the lips. “See you tonight.”

“Bye darlin’.”

And with that comment - Agent DiNozzo waltzed out of NCIS as bright as when he came into it. Gibbs looked at Tom once more. “I still hate you for losing me DiNozzo.”

“I know Jethro but I can’t find it in myself to be sorry. You really should have a word with your agents about situational awareness.” Tom added because he had a mischievous side.

“Let me guess, you don’t want the bug removed?” Gibbs said as he got up to leave.

Morrow smirked. “I have an afternoon of boring paperwork, allow an old man his indulgences.”

Gibbs rolled his eyes. “You’re just waiting until the next political mixer to rub it in Jarvis’ face that he get it wrong.”
Morrow snorted. “No, I will leave it to Tony, he can get away with more than we can as Jarvis is not his boss.”

Gibbs smirked all the way back down to the bullpen. He waited until he sat back in his chair to face the stares. “Can I help you?”

“Do you know GQ?”

Gibbs rolled his eyes. “Yes, I do and GQ has a name and likes to be called by it.”

Viv’s eyes glinted with the scent of a chance. “And what is his name?”

Gibbs smirked before answering. “Feel free to ask the Director.”

Burley spat his coffee out at that comment, knowing how well that would go. “I forget how much of a bastard you can be sometimes Gibbs.”

“And proud of it ... now back to work.”

The Awards evening had only one highlight to it. He could enjoy Jarvis' blood pressure rising to a point where he was hoping his head might explode. “Evening Sir.”

Morrow turned around. “Agent Gibbs, you are here. Well, thanks to that I have secured a decent pot of money that I will share with you in the morning.”

Gibbs smirked, he wasn’t much for a dog and pony show, but he did love to fuck with people’s expectations. He considered it a hobby.

The announcer spoke the next person’s name. “Agent Anthony DiNozzo.”

And oh boy, Tony was not shy and never saw a reason to be but tonight the man had made an effort. Gibbs snickered at how dumbstruck Tom looked for a second. Gibbs being a bastard said. “You
better go greet your boy before other people get ideas.”

Morrow gave him a glare but was already moving to greet Tony. They kept it low key not out of shame but they were not demonstrative people in public, their relationship was theirs and nobody’s business but their own.

Kate stepped up behind Gibbs. “Morrow and GQ?”

Gibbs could almost hear the disappointment in her voice. “Yep and they are sickening. You would have no chance. Although, you might make a friend if you call him, Tony. He hates being objectified by how he looks.”

She flushed at rebuke but it was a fair one. She watched as Morrow pulled Tony onto the dance floor, and their chemistry was electric. It didn’t bother them that people were staring, they were just focussed on each other.

“How on Earth did all this happen?”

_Gibbs smirked. “Well, now that is a story for another time. Come on, let’s show them how it’s done.”_
Mike was a lost soul and he was convinced that was where he deserved to be. His relationship with Leah hadn’t survived the presidential accident. In fact, not a lot had survived the accident. He still had a job with the Secret Service but he was out of the White House and he didn’t know what to do. They kept telling Mike that it wasn’t his fault but all he knew was the First Lady was dead and he was banished to Headquarters so the President didn’t have to see his face. So what was Mike supposed to think?

A month ago, a bar and alcohol seemed like a good choice, he didn’t care about the cliche of it. He was willing to roll with it and find oblivion at the bottom of his bourbon bottle. He’d run in the morning until he puked out his hangover and it would all start again the next day. It was a delightfully bitter angsty cycle that he had no reason or inclination to break. The alcohol had the benefit of muting the memories of the car going over the snowy bridge that fateful night where he’d been faced with an impossible choice. The trouble was Mike kept replaying that scene over and over again every time he closed his eyes.

Tony had seen the guy at the end of the bar and could guess he was a regular fixture by the way the barman treated him. Tony had caught the badge and the gun and left him alone, well, to begin with as he’d been there himself and was well aware that right or wrong sometimes you needed alcohol to help blot the painful memories. The problem was when you chose not to climb out of the bottle - then you were on a one-way express trip to alcoholism.

Tony figured he could do his good deed for the day and offer alternate distractions. He could offer a willing ear so that he could bitch, or something more, it wasn’t a hardship as the guy was seriously hot and exactly what Tony looked for in a man. “You know there are other distractions that can help you better than alcohol.”

Tony saw the man’s immediate glance down, cataloguing the badge and the gun under his jacket. Tony was not the type to go anywhere unarmed. Too many years in law enforcement and too many enemies made meant that he had no intention of being caught with his metaphorical pants down.

“Which agency?” The raspy voice asked, and Tony shivered at just those two words. He really hoped that this evening ended with a bed and some hot sex.
“NCIS, and you?” Tony asked. It was ironic this was their first question to each other rather than asking what their names were.

“Secret Service, Mike Banning.”

Tony then understood why the guy was climbing into the bottle. Guilt was a terrible thing and misplaced guilt was even worse. Tony knew all about it, he’d been there many times himself. He wouldn’t dismiss Banning’s feelings or try to lecture him - that was a sure fire way for Banning to shut down and ignore him so Tony tried a different tack with the conversation. “Anthony DiNozzo but please call me, Tony.” He added. “Can I buy you another drink?”

“You’re not going to lecture me?” Banning asked him, wary, telling Tony that he was right on the money in how people close to him had tried to help him.

Tony shook his head. “Nope, not unless you want me to.” He added with a wry grin.

Banning shook his head. “Sit a while if you are going to buy me a drink. You may as well brighten up the place a bit.”

Tony took the opening and ran with it. “You might regret that.”

Banning let his eyes run over the very fit and lithe muscular body. “Only in the best possible way.” He wasn’t drunk enough for his eyes to be affected. The gorgeous agent had chosen to keep his sorry ass company so Mike could go with the flow and see where it ended.

Tony flashed a wicked grin before drinking his whiskey. “Promises, promises.”

Mike was watching his lips and Tony decided he was going to switch to a beer if only to tease him with his lips wrapped around a bottle. Tony guessed he wasn’t going home alone tonight. Good, he was going to test Banning’s stamina all night long if he had his way.
It turns out that Ex-Special Forces soldiers really did excel in everything they did. Intense focus, great stamina (OH BOY!) and a virtually none existent recuperation period. Tony went to work the next day fantastically exhausted, aching in all the right places and having secured a second date. Tony had demanded to show Mike the benefits of Italian cooking.

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A month later and there was a marked change in Banning. Tony knew it was early in their dating but he pulled Mike into his apartment. It had caused a brief argument but Tony had put his foot down. Mike’s apartment was shit, and a wallowing, health violation pit of despair and since Tony cared about him, he may as well move in. It was not like with their schedules that they would be under each other’s feet. So Tony being Tony, sneakily had used sex and asked him again just as he sucked his brains out of his dick.

Mike was powerless to say no to that smug smile and whilst it may have been quick it was helping. In fact, Tony was helping his mental health way more than the futile counselling sessions. Mike doubted the counselors would listen if he said he didn’t need to talk. He had a partner at home who listened and understood, or alternatively, demanded Mike screw his brains out (that is when he wasn’t being nailed to the mattress himself).

Mike’s change in demeanor had been noted by his superior, the Director of the Service, Lynne Jacobs, and when she saw the change of address she wondered if this was related to the change in attitude. The background check on the other occupant of the flat was intriguing and Lynne could admit she was curious. The man’s service record read like a Hollywood script, plague, air-force one, framed for murder and so much more so she decided to drop in because she needed to know if her best agent had his head back in the game. Plus, she was always on the look-out for talent.

So here she was, outside a nice apartment, not too far from several of the Federal Agencies. The obvious wealth needed to afford the apartment might make some suspicious - but she had seen the financial background, and the size of the inheritance DiNozzo had received from the British uncle. It kind of made her like DiNozzo more - with his wealth he didn’t need to work at all let alone serve - he did it out of duty.

Her knock was answered by a tall man, dressed casually but stylishly. His bright eyes were the first thing she noticed and the shrewd intelligence she could see in those eyes. DiNozzo had seen her, her
security and didn’t even blink instead he greeted her. “Hello Director Jacobs, we weren’t expecting you, Mike is at work, which you already know.”

As he said it, there was a look of dawning realisation - like he’d just figured out something. She was guessing he’d figured out just who she was here to see, and it wasn’t Banning.

“I know.” She said with a smirk on her face.

He was still frowning but he remembered his manners. “Come in please.” Tony offered, wondering just what the hell was going on. He didn’t think he’d done anything to piss off the Secret Service and the FBI had gone a whole two years without trying to arrest him for murder. *It was a record.*

He watched as Jacobs sat on the sofa opposite him and her guards took up sentinel posts outside after having thoroughly swept his apartment. *So much for a private life,* Tony thought with irony as they checked his bedroom. Oh, he knew Jacobs was aware of the relationship between him and Mike. What he needed to do was figure out why she was here.

She actually said as much to him. “You must be wondering why I am here?”

His lips twisted with wry humour. “The thought may have crossed my mind ma’am but you strike me as the type of person not to leave me guessing.”

Jacobs nodded her head in agreement because she prefered frank conversations. She had so few of them in Washington that she adored the few she did get. “There has been a marked improvement in Agent Banning’s health and I am seeking the cause of it.”

Tony snorted. “Well, I met him in a bar and I took home. The relationship that developed surprised both of us but we’re too old to give a shit about what anyone thinks anymore.”

Jacobs couldn't help but think that the agent had his thinking all wrong. They were too dangerous and lethal to care what others thought. “So the love of a good man?”

Tony raised an eyebrow and was ready to draw a line in the sand. Whilst he was willing to have a serious conversation, he wasn’t willing to discuss his love life. “If you like.”
Jacobs seeing DiNozzo was on guard with that line of the conversation. “I’m sorry Agent DiNozzo, you have to understand why we would have concerns about a serious relationship that suddenly appears out of nowhere, especially as our agents guard the President.”

Tony stiffened because he was surprised by where this conversation was going. “I wasn’t aware Mike was back on rotation.”

Jacobs smiled at him and Tony wasn’t too sure whether he should relax or be scared. “You would be right but Agent Banning was our best agent up until the accident and it has been noted about his improvement in the last month. I wanted to see if it was something we could use with other agents.”

Tony shrugged because it wasn’t his agency or his problem, he just cared about Mike so he repeated what he said. “I saw him in a bar and I had been where he was. I offered him a friendly ear, I didn’t ask insensitive questions and then I not-so-slowly seduced him.”

“You’re very blunt.”

Tony snorted because the only way he could explain it was to say. “I was a cop for six years and I’ve spent ten years with NCIS. Unless I am playing an undercover role, I lost being coy a long time ago.”

Lynne had her answer and could guess the agent could be way more of a handful than Banning could ever be. “Thank you for your time, Agent DiNozzo.”

The explosion nearly rocked them off their seats. Tony didn’t hesitate, he instinctively launched himself and covered the director for the initial blast until her guards could take over. All four of them: the two guards, Director Jacobs and Tony were armed with their guns within seconds - a natural reaction to the perceived danger. Tony looked out of his window needing information about what the fuck was going on. It was their worst nightmare. “Christ, it’s the White House they’ve attacked.”

Tony knew he needed to get to NCIS and he was sure that Jacobs was about to get whisked somewhere secure. She looked at him. “I know Mike, he is a tough bastard and won’t let any terrorist kill him.”
Tony managed a weak smile already thinking about the tasks in front of him as a way to distract himself. “I know Director. Good luck because I think all of America needs that right now.”

Tony’s worry wasn’t unfounded because whilst he knew Mike was actually working across the street, he knew his lover and there was no way he was going to stay there. He would be heading towards the President, killing anyone who got in his way. He had to trust that Mike would stay alive and he would do what was required to find the bastards.

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Tony had reached the office with record speed and the bullpen was in chaos and so Tony took a deep breath and bellowed. “Now is not the time to lose your heads! We have a job to do and one you have trained for, we will be doing whatever is necessary to find the bastards. Until then, make sure and check in with all our sub-offices, we need to know our military bases are secure and what everyone’s status is.”

Vance had just come out of his office where he’d been discussing the priorities for their agency. DiNozzo had waltzed in, on his day off, and took control of the agency and the orders he spat out were exactly what was needed. Gibbs smiled. “He knows how I think Leon, he’ll keep them busy until you’re ready to give serious tasks after the initial call.”

They both grimaced as neither were looking forward to this - all agencies would no doubt be scrabbling for power at the worst possible moment. Vance was inspired for a second. “DiNozzo get up here, we’re going to MTAC.”

Tony looked up surprised by the order, not used to the idea that Vance no longer hated his guts. Vance waited until he reached the upper-level. “You and Gibbs will be coming as you are the only people in the office with the right security clearance.”

Tony sighed but didn’t argue as it made sense, instead, he had the good sense to say. “Yes Sir.”

The video-conference was between all the relevant agencies, Tony recognised the big terror-related agents. So this was real. Tony shuddered at just the thought of the loss of life. It didn’t matter, he got his head in the game but the bad news kept coming. The President was trapped in the bunker with terrorists, who seemed to have got in as the South Korean contingent. Trumbull, the Speaker of
the House, was the de-facto leader and interim President whilst they awaited further information and took control of the situation.

Gibbs was the only one to know about Mike because Tony had no inclination to become the butt (no pun intended) of every joke on the team. Tony had told Gibbs pragmatically in case something happened when he was working. “Banning is a tough bastard. He won’t go down without a fight.”

Tony smiled weakly. “I know that, did you know I had his boss in my living room just before the explosion? She wanted to know why he was doing better this last month.”

Gibbs smirked. “Well then, sounds like you’ve got a useful contact to find out about Banning. Until then, keep your focus on finding out how the Korean bastards got here.”

Tony nodded. “On it.”

Tony went back down to the bullpen and started ordering about many of the agents, refining the original orders. Gibbs watched the one minute where McGee was about to argue and was silenced with one look. Wise boy, if he had started something with Tony today, well, Tony would have finished it, and he wouldn’t be nice about it.

The office was working like a fine cog in a machine and Gibbs trusted he could go back into MTAC and work his contacts. Vance sighed. “I need someone to work the update loop every thirty minutes.”

“Ask DiNozzo, he is the charming one of us Leon.”
Gibbs didn’t want to let Leon know the real reason but he hoped he would see reason.

Vance thought about it for a moment and realised that Gibbs was right. “Agreed.”

Gibbs looked up and heard Tony order McGee. “Just fucking hack who you have to ... no one will say anything today McGee, this was an attack on our President.”

Gibbs had to agree and he did wonder why McGee seemed to pick and choose when it was convenient to have a moral crisis about his hacking.
Gibbs broke up the conversation before McGee could say something to infuriate Tony. “DiNozzo, thirty minutes, starting on the hour with updates of our position.”

“On it boss,” DiNozzo said without missing a beat. He then did something to his fancy watch - no doubt as a way to remind himself of the update times.

Gibbs didn’t miss the look of gratitude in his SFA’s eyes but he waved it off.

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Less than twelve hours later and Tony was now aware that Mike was acting as a one-man wrecking ball against the terrorists’ plan; he’d already rescued the President’s son and now he was going for the Commander-in-Chief.

The video conference was closing down when Lynne Jacobs had one final order. She didn’t give a shit if she was stepping on toes. “Agent DiNozzo.”

“Yes ma’am.” Tony answered hoping she was going to let him see Mike before he disappeared into debriefing after debriefing.

“Get down to the gates, you deserve to be the first person to see your partner.” She ordered, without missing a beat.

Tony’s smile was beatific and she found herself thinking Banning was a lucky bastard in more than one way. “Thank you, Director.”

Tony could hear Vance asking Gibbs. “Did she just imply DiNozzo and Banning are...”

Gibbs smirked and because he is a bastard and proud of it. “Did she? It’s none of my business and I won’t ask until he chooses to tell me.”
Tony was standing by the security cordon waiting for Mike to emerge. He’d heard on the radio that the President was secure and they were on their way out of the seriously damaged White House and he could finally breathe properly again. Tony had focussed on the case as a way to distract himself, not realising just how invested he was with Mike until terrorists tried to kill him.

Mike had never looked so badass. He was carrying the President to the gate covered in soot and grime and blood. He looked like a one-man war machine which was what he had turned himself into. The smile on his face told Tony something else - The President was alive against all odds and that was all thanks to Mike. He also knew that whilst Mike’s demons weren’t magically healed - Mike would be more than okay, he would be great again.

Tony’s heart was in his mouth as Mike turned to him. He didn’t give a shit about the World’s Press photographing events as they unfolded or the implications of what it would mean for his own career. He met Mike in the middle and pulled him into the fiercest, most passionate kiss he would risk with the injuries he couldn’t be sure of.

Mike was more than equal to the task, the one thing guiding him through the White House apart from his duty was the idea he had to make it out alive for Tony. He pulled Tony close. “I’m alive and I’m OK.”

“I know you sexy bastard but you can’t scare me like that ever again.” Tony said, letting his worry show.

Mike kissed him once more, not liking the look on Tony’s face - knowing he had put it there. “I love you Tony and that’s stronger than any pansy-ass terrorist.”

The last kiss they shared was plastered all over the world’s newspapers the next day, domestic and foreign. That one kiss did more to further LGBT rights in the military than anything else previously. After all, even the most extreme protesters who argued against gay men serving in the military were hard pressed to argue against the man who had single-handedly saved the President, and his son, from the terrorist threat. Anyone who tried to argue against his deeds or military record just came
across as unpatriotic.

President Asher was only all too happy to use the national sentiment to push through the repeal of DADT and shake up the marriage laws. After all, he felt it a fitting gift for the man who had saved the White House, his child, and his life - To be able to marry the love of his life.
The wonderful life of Anthony Hale (Peter Hale)

Chapter Summary

Anthony Hale often wondered how differently his life might have gone if he hadn’t been married to Peter Hale

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

(Author’s Notes: Canon is played with as technically Tony would be older than Peter Hale but that didn’t fit with the story I was writing so I reversed the eight-year theoretical age gap so Peter is 26 and Tony is 18 when the story starts.)

Anthony Hale often wondered how differently his life might have gone if he hadn’t been married to Peter Hale.

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Tony couldn’t believe the words that had just come out of his father’s mouth and had to clarify. “You are marrying me off for a business deal?”

His Dad frowned not seeing the problem, and that was the most tragic part in Tony’s mind. His Dad confirmed it saying, “The deal is done and signed.”

Tony coughed in disbelief. This was a practical joke, or something, an arranged marriage was unheard of nowadays. “Who does this in this day and age?”

His father picked up his Blazer and Tony knew what that meant. When his Dad picked up his suit jacket he considered his meeting over. Senior stood up trying to act imperious and in charge. “You will do this for the family because if you don’t Junior, we are done and the family will be bankrupt.”

Tony wanted to curse, growl, lash out. There were so many things he wanted to do but he was bone weary tired. His childhood hadn’t been great but he never imagined this could happen. He wasn’t
going to let his Dad off the hook for throwing away his future. “Just like that? What about college? What about my life? My career plans?”

Then a new guy came in and he was the type to focus all attention on him as soon as he entered the room. Tony thought his Dad should take lessons, Senior wanted to act authoritative, this guy just was naturally. “DiNozzo get out ... I want to talk to my fiance.”

Tony sized him up, cocking his head to the side as if he was contemplating a great mystery. “Do I get the name of my fiance?"

His fiance and Tony was still struggling to wrap that fact around his mind, flashed him a wicked smirk. “I’m Peter Hale. Junior Lawyer.”

Tony met his handshake. “Anthony DiNozzo. College Student.”

Peter grinned. “Don’t worry toyboy, I won’t stop you going to college ... In fact, I kind of want to get out of the state and you are a perfectly hot excuse for me to go.”

Tony was impressed by the bluntness and could match his snark. “Well, if you are going to be calling me toyboy ... be prepared for me to call you Sugar Daddy.”

Peter’s eyes went dark and Tony felt his pants tighten, which was crazy - he wasn’t into guys. “Oh baby, you can call me Daddy any time you like.”

“I’m not gay,” Tony said almost reflexively.

“Baby, I am everyone’s type, just give it time.” Peter assured him with the type of cocksure attitude of someone who had always got his way in life.
Damn Peter in all his attractive asshole glory, he was right. Tony wasn’t willing to cheat on his spouse, not wanting to turn out like his father. Tony had rationed it out, he was hot, Peter was hot and how did he know if he liked gay sex or not - unless he tried it. Tony found on that first night that he didn’t just like it, he loved it. Peter had adored showing him all about gay sex and Tony turned into a willing student. Although, Peter had to be exceptional in bed for Tony to call him Daddy.

They lived off campus and slowly their lives started to entwine. The apartment they shared spoke of casual wealth; they had their bedroom and two offices for them to work in separately and not distract each other from their work or studies. Peter was a vicious lawyer and when Tony wasn’t in class, studying or training for his football he made a point of watching his husband in the courtroom. The victory sex with Peter was extra hot.

Life was fun but they were insulated in Ohio and they knew it. In Tony’s second year as they approached Christmas Peter became tense and stressed and Tony was concerned enough to find out why. “What’s wrong?”

“We have to go to California for the holiday.” Peter replied and Tony knew that the relationship between Peter and the rest of the family was tense.

So this was not going to be fun - Joy!

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It got tenser too after Talia decided that Tony needed to take the bite if he was to remain part of the family as she wouldn’t have a weak member of the pack. The verbal fight between the siblings had been vicious and Tony had winced.

Tony’s mind was still trying to wrap around the idea of werewolves. And yet, he found himself asking, “Could I die?”

That stopped the argument cold and even Talia flushed. As the Alpha, she had to live by her choices and answer the question as it came from one of her ‘orders’. “There is a chance, yes.”
“And you being Alpha of the pack gives you the right to order my potential death. It wasn’t enough to force a marriage on Peter and me.” Tony countered immediately.

Peter looked at him as if he was the second coming and Tony just squeezed his hand. He may be only twenty years old but he knew his own mind. Their marriage may have started out as an arranged marriage but he had no inclination to get a divorce and he knew Peter felt the same. He hoped it never happened but it would be their decision.

Talia didn’t like the questioning of her authority, or the reminder that she could get her hands dirty. She liked to pretend she was above it leaving the dirty work to Peter, as her left hand (enforcer). “Don’t pretend you don’t care for each other. I have a sensitive nose.”

Tony showed his own teeth. “I love my husband which is why I don’t want to check out early because of a rash decision.”

She looked at the couple and chuckled and remembered the saying be careful what you wish for. She had wanted Peter married because she was hoping the distraction of a mate would civilize him a little. She had assumed that Anthony DiNozzo would be moldable and meek, the age-gap helping. What she hadn’t expected was for the newly married couple to circle each other and form a true partnership. The younger man was a rising star in his sports career which concerned her.

“Your sports career presents me with a worry.” Talia answered calmly and honestly.

Tony frowned but asked a reasonable question. “Erm, how?”

Peter sighed knowing why. “Your career is going places, places like NFL potentially and that would bring out a lot of scrutiny on our family. We live in public but try and avoid the limelight so as not to attract hunters.”

Tony nodded, understanding what his husband was saying and his heart froze. He’d loved football and sports for so long. It had offered him an escape from his home life and he was good at it. Now he was with Peter and his studies were going well, there wasn’t the same urgency but he would miss it as it was something he excelled at. He asked a few questions trying to see what the hell she wanted. “So you want me to quit? Not go Pro? ... What exactly do you want Alpha Hale?”
She smiled at him because considering he’d only just learnt about werewolves - he was doing remarkably well, she could see how he and Peter worked. “A bite would bind you to this pack but would make playing sports a problem.”

“Why? Anger issues?” Tony asked already guessing the answer.

“Yes.”

Tony had one last argument to make before he would decide. He’d learned a few things about arguing with Peter as his husband, the man was an exceptional wolf. “What about being Pro is a bad thing? Yes, we would be in the spotlight but I have always had exceptional control of my emotions.” With a smirk, “As you can imagine, being married to Peter has helped me refine it.”

Talia sighed and for once, gave in, she was impressed by the united front and by that, she meant the fact that Peter had let his younger husband argue. If he didn’t like sports, he could have a good career following Peter into law. “Yes the bite is not without dangers but the advantages are numerous. You would be stronger and more importantly, if a hunter targets you as a way to get to Peter - you would be less breakable.”

Tony could feel Peter’s hand clutch his at just the thought of it. “Is that a problem?”

Peter shrugged as there was no easy answer there. “There is a council and theoretically they follow a code. We should be left alone as we are a good pack but ... Fanatics are everywhere and some hunters consider us monsters for just existing.”

Tony could just hear the loathing in his voice. “You are a bastard, Peter, and self-professed but my husband is no monster and I won’t let him become one.”

Peter’s eyes flashed yellow for the first time in Tony’s presence and Tony didn’t shy away. He leaned into his husband. “Don’t make me hot and bothered in front of your sister. She said already she has a sensitive nose.”

Peter chuckled at his audacious mate. “You are the light of my life.”
Tony asked him seriously. “Do you want me to get the bite?”

Peter sighed because he wished his husband wouldn’t ask him such a question. “You really shouldn’t give a lawyer such an opening.”

Tony pulled him close so he could see into Peter’s eyes. “Don’t give me the lawyer, give me my husband.”

Peter chuckled ruefully, never imagining he would come to care for his arranged bride husband the way he did. “There is part of me that wants to say yes for selfish reasons but Anthony, I want what you want. I want your life to be happy and fulfilled. That is not a cop-out - that is the truth.”

Tony looked back at his sister-in-law who didn’t look too impressed that he had all but ignored her to have a private conversation with his husband. Too bad. It was her unreasonable demand that started this in the first place.

Tony asked his next question but tied the two results together because if he could, he wanted Peter and football. “If you bite me and I can prove I have my emotions under control, I want Peter and me to continue our lives ... even if that takes me to the NFL. We would be in the spotlight but that scrutiny provides its own protection.”

She hummed but explained a few things. “Peter is my enforcer.”

Tony snorted but didn’t back down. “You don’t need us close to hand but we will always help pack. It’s what you do for family, and now I have it, I will always fight for it.”

She smiled because she could hear an agreement there. She might not like his argumentative side but when he was her beta things would change (even an Alpha could be naive.)

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Talia had bitten Tony during the off-season, wanting to give him the most time to get his wolfy-side under control. When he woke up, having healed from the bite -- the first thing he saw was Peter. Tony thought he knew Peter but now Tony could see and smell so much more.
“Hello toyboy,” Peter teased.

Tony snickered. “Not now Daddy, your sister bit me, and everything is so much more.”

Peter smiled because he could see the joy in Tony’s eyes. “More? Focus on me.”

Oh, Tony was, he was using each of his senses and was glutting on Peter because once he did - he could filter other senses. “It is helping, I can hear your heartbeat.”

Peter looked at Tony and Tony frowned. “It just sped up and you smell of cinnamon.”

Peter grinned and it was like their first few weeks of marriage. “Lesson one. Arousal.”

Tony perked up smiling slyly, “Is that so.”

Talia shook her head because nearly every beta ever bitten into the family struggled and shifted into beta form out of shock. Tony had seemingly taken to being a werewolf with ridiculous ease. She wouldn’t hold her breath - but the outlook was promising.

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Tony was gritting his teeth. He was blocking his healing which was exhausting but he promised his Alpha that he would never reveal the secret. Damn Pitt, bastard thought it was a good idea to break his leg.

Peter had rushed to his side with a humorous grin. “You would do anything to get out of a family reunion.”
Tony gritted his teeth. “Hey, I’m the in-law, they’re your family.”

Peter smirked at his husband knowing just why he was frustrated. Whilst Peter would never want Tony hurt - he would continue to play the ridiculous sport. It had gotten better since he took the bite but the amount of damage he could sustain in one game was ridiculous. “Well, you will play the game and you know you want to go back to see your nieces and nephews.”

Tony snorted because Laura, Derek, and Cora were way more fun than their mother.

Peter growled at the nurse who suggested he couldn’t sleep in the same bed. It was a good idea because when they were in a dreamless slumber they were woken to searing pain through the pack bonds - **something was very wrong**.

*And then Peter’s eyes turned Red.*

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The fire had gutted the Pack House and Peter growled with anger. He and Tony could smell the wolfsbane. Here they were, Talia’s kids shivering in the snow and the smell of wolfsbane thick in the air. This was no accident, this was the work of hunters.

Tony and Peter shared a look - they would get the hunters responsible but the Pack came first.

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Tony looked at himself and had always imagined a different kind of uniform going to work. Peter approved, the red eye and the burst of arousal spoke volumes. “Stop staring at my ass, I have to go to work.”
“Yes, you do Deputy Hale.”

Tony flushed and stepped away from Peter recognising that tone. “You have work too. DA Hale.”

They hadn’t done things the wolfy way but the takedown of the Argent’s had been all the more complete by using the law. It meant that what remained of the pack had flourished in safety and the Argent family had moved away post-haste.

Tony had always assumed he’d go back to his football having miraculously recovered from his injury but the fire changed everything. He’d finished his degree with only the exams left to take and in his off hours he’d worked on piecing together the clues about the fire. It bugged at both Peter and Tony because whilst they were away - they still worked as enforcers and had an active network to warn of threats.

No one could plan for the bitch, Kate Argent. A hunter who supposedly hunted monsters but was the worst type herself - a sexual predator.

Derek had been devastated to realise how he’d been targeted and it would take years of therapy to fix it. They were lucky that Marin Morrell was in town - she had agreed to take over from her brother as the Pack Emissary as Peter had fired Deaton.

Tony’s work on the case had brought him to the attention of the police department and the newly elected sheriff, Stilinski, suggested he should join up with the force. Tony had thought long and hard about it and after many discussions with Peter, he did just that.

Anthony Hale often wondered how differently his life might have gone if he hadn’t been married to Peter Hale - The intriguing part was despite how many things changed - it was what stayed the same that was poignant and spoke to the heart of his character.

Chapter End Notes
Whilst I thank everyone who has offered a pairing suggestion - I am now closing suggestions for pairings to work on the backlog of names given and the expanded stories/timestamp series as a result of the current pairings.

Many thanks to all have read, reviewed, and left kudos in 2016 :D - All goes well, I may open up a volume two in 2017 for all the pairings I never got a chance to write :D

Happy New Year!
Holidays were simply a marvellous idea. Daniel knew how to speak twenty-three spoken languages and that was the best word he could come up with to describe how he felt. He was lying on a beach without a care in the galaxy (Not a mistaken word). Daniel had alongside the other members of his team fought back the threat of the System Lord, Ba’al, in his latest attempt to once again enslave the world. His reward for saving the world - was a holiday to a place he named.

Daniel had chosen Italy as it was a great place to unwind and the culture was so rich. The beach was immaculate and there was a serious game of beach volleyball in his line of sight. Now get your mind out of the gutter, because much to Daniel’s disappointment - they weren’t on a nudist beach. Shame.

Daniel could see there was a level of skill here that spoke of natural athleticism. Yes, the men and the women playing the game were gorgeous - to Danny, it seemed liked you had to reach a certain level of attractiveness to be allowed onto the beach. Why his inner thoughts sound like Jack all of a sudden he didn’t know.

The one player who caught his attention was the tall male, who was in terrific shape but his body showed a few too many scars. This wasn’t a professional sportsman, Daniel would guess soldier or law enforcement and as he didn’t see dog tags - that left law enforcement.

Daniel’s musings were distracted by a voice from above him. Christ, Jack would have his head about his current lack of situational awareness. “I’m too gorgeous for you to just keep staring at me like that, or you know, you could buy me a coffee.”

Daniel didn’t hear Italian like he suspected but rather American. He didn’t know why he couldn't resist rising to sarcasm, perhaps it was a built in reflex from having worked with O’Neill for so long. “You're very sure of yourself.”

The man grinned at him and Danny knew he was in trouble. Gorgeous guy, lean muscular legs, strong built torso and those lips and eyes were so good Danny wouldn’t be sure which deity he should thank - and he knew a lot of them. “I get paid to be observant and you either want me, or you are compiling a dossier on me for your boss.”
Daniel chuckled recognising that type of paranoia. “Which of the alphabets do you belong to?”

“NCIS. Anthony DiNozzo.”

Daniel smiled at him. “Doctor Daniel Jackson. You are a long way from home Agent DiNozzo.”

Tony smirked. “It’s Tony. So coffee?”

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Tony walked through the crowds effortlessly, making his way towards his date. He wasn’t normally brave enough to go after the men who caught his eye but being in Italy had given him the nudge he needed. The cafe he’d found was perfect - one for true coffee lovers, none of these sugar drinks masquerading as coffee.

There was Daniel standing, waiting for him so there was the first hurdle out of the way. “Good to see you again, Doctor Jackson.”

The linguist wrinkled his nose. “Just Daniel or Danny please.”

“As you wish, Danny.” Tony replied and they ordered their coffees. They managed to keep up a steady conversation and both were enjoying their time immensely. Towards the end of their time together, Tony came up with a great idea. “You don’t want to say goodbye anymore than I do?”

Jackson smiled with relief. “No, I don’t.”

Tony’s enthusiasm for the idea grew even more. “Why not you show me one thing you love from Italy and I will do the same in return?”

Daniel liked the idea but then bit his lip. He was well aware that he was a bit of a geek but knew it
was not everyone’s cup of tea. “Are you sure? I mean being an anthropologist I would love to visit the Vatican Museums.”

Tony guessed that one of Daniel’s friends would tease Danny good-naturedly about his intelligence. He pulled Danny’s hand so he knew he had his whole attention. “Danny, I want to see what you love and I am sure your enthusiasm will be enough to carry me through. And how can I judge, I want you to see La Bohème with me.”

Daniel had a soft smile because Tony had shared his passion for music. He could guess that wasn’t something that everyone got to see. He sensed that Tony guarded his heart as strongly as he guarded his more ancient books. “I would be glad to.”

At the Vatican Museum, Tony and Danny walked around and soon ended up linking hands. Daniel was telling him all about the most interesting facts about the figures depicted. Tony was grinning fondly when Danny asked. “What?”

Tony shook his head. “I was just thinking if any of my history professors were like you ... I would never have picked Phys. Ed for my first degree.”

Danny smirked at Tony and filed away the comment to ask about which degrees he now had. He adored the fact that Tony turned the idea of jocks on their heads, just like he was turning the idea of what an egghead acted like. “Is this a kink thing? I thought that was a fourth date kind of thing?”

Tony slyly grinned at him. “You can be my professor whenever you like Dr. Jackson.”

Jackson shook his head. “Sure thing, let’s go to the opera first. Damn, I need to buy a suit for that.”

Tony was glad only his mind went to dirty places. “Well, we are in one of the suit capitals of the world. Let’s both go.”

Daniel was never so glad for the paychecks they got for saving the world. Danger money when you save the whole world has a lot of zeros. It was a fantastic excuse to see Tony in his boxers as they one-upped the game and chose what the other’s suit would look like. Daniel chose a grey prince-of-wales material that brought out the green in Tony’s eyes. Tony in return chose a Miami blue pinstripe suit. The tailors had initially bemoaned the time in which they had to design the suits until
Tony had said in his most snobby voice. “Such a shame, my uncle, Clive Paddington, was telling me how good this shop was.”

“You’re a Paddington?”

Tony smiled at him. “The Italian-American branch.”

Daniel watched in amazement as such a simple exchange seemed to kick their customer service up into high gear. “Should I ask?”

Tony shrugged. “Maybe later.”

The suits were totally worth it - later that evening their minds and their hands were on different things. The rest of the holiday went much the same way with both of them so careful not to name what this was. They were aware their jobs were risky and not ones that they could leave.

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It was their last morning in Rome and Danny didn’t want to get up out of the bed they had appropriated for the last day of their respective holidays. Until then, he had kidded himself that this would be a holiday romance. There was no way that Anthony would want to risk a relationship considering he worked in law enforcement. Daniel was not naive and knew that certain issues could beset him still, he couldn’t help but say. “I don’t want this to end.”

Tony had a simple solution. “So we don’t say goodbye ... we make long-distance work.”

Daniel kissed him. “You’re a genius.”

Tony snickered. “No dear. You are the one with the multiple doctorates.”

Daniel pulled him back into another kiss. “You may have those you work with fooled but you confessed to me Dr. DiNozzo.”
Tony shrugged because the disintegration of his friendships at NCIS had sucked but they were useful in some respects. He had finished his dissertation to earn his doctorate in Criminology.

Tony came back to NCIS oozing satisfaction and his relaxed mask was back in place. McGee took one look. “Let me guess you met up with your frat brothers.”

Tony shook his head and feeling more confidence than he had in years, let a mask slip. “Nope, I met a great guy. He spoke so many languages that it made my head spin. Plus, he was oh, so, talented using that flexible tongue in so many different ways. I’m a lucky man.”

McGee rolled his eyes. “Look if you don’t want to tell us then just say so. You don’t need to lie to us.”

Gibbs wanted to shake his head. McGee still couldn’t see what was right in front of him. He saw a perfect opportunity to test the waters with his SFA. He hoped that he wouldn’t have to do the feelings shtick - it was not his strong suit. As they left work that day, DiNozzo and he were the last two agents.

“Cowboy steaks?”

DiNozzo was startled by the request. He hadn’t been asked around to Gibbs’ since the explosion. Gibbs hated the guarded look in DiNozzo’s eyes - like an abused puppy waiting for its next kick.

Gibbs put the two plates of Cowboy Steaks on the table. “So this linguist. Will you see him again?”

Tony choked on his piece of steak and Gibbs patted his back to help. “Jesus Boss, warn a guy.”
Gibbs smirked at his SFA. “Hey, I am not blind to what I am told. You told McGee the truth and you did it masterfully. I know how well you can wield a perfect truth and have it dismissed.”

Tony flushed at the compliment. “You will turn a boy’s head with compliments like that boss.”

Gibbs rolled his eyes and for a second, he threw his precious rules out of the window to right a wrong that needed to be fixed. “Sorry for forgetting what you meant son.”

Tony looked up and his breath went short because he thought he’d lost Gibbs. “You forgot me.”

Gibbs shook his head. “Not really. Just everything got jumbled up and painful, as soon as it settled I knew I needed to talk to you but you’d gone to Italy.”

“You really remember?” Tony asked sounding way too young for a second.

“Yeah, I do.” Gibbs added darkly. “And I still want to gut Senior.”

It was a serious truth - the man had no right to the title of ‘father’ but that wasn’t what Tony needed. Gibbs would have to forgo his functioning mute persona for a second. “Look - you know I don’t do feelings but if you need to talk about Daniel you can say what you like while I ....”

Tony finished with an amused grin. “Sand the boat?”

Gibbs smirked as it was a well-worn argument but one that suggested that their friendship was on the mend. He hoped so, Kelly would kill him from the afterlife for forgetting her adopted big brother.

He did get to find out about Italy and the linguist. Dr. Daniel Jackson. He worked at Cheyenne Mountain and Gibbs and Tony agreed that the cover story was terrible. After all, why would a linguist and anthropologist be needed for deep-space telemetry

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Gibbs found himself wishing he could meet this Daniel because he wanted to thank him. He’d done more to settle and help Tony than anyone else. He knew why Tony had calmed down at work, it never bothered him - the antics. He knew why DiNozzo did it and had before the explosion always been able to see beneath the surface.

He’d forgotten for a while and it messed with the team dynamics something rotten. He’d wanted to fix his friendship with Tony first before setting about fixing the team.

He should have known that Tony would get there first. He’d waltzed in and laid down the law impressively - so much so, that Gibbs wondered if Tony and his old drill instructor were related. McGee and David had appealed to him, hoping Gibbs would support them. He hadn’t and the stunned silence after his comment of “Don’t whine at me, you know I don’t listen. DiNozzo is my SFA. End of discussion” was one to treasure.

The phone-call from autopsy surprised him - it was Ducky asking for him. The examiner always knew more than everyone else. “Your son needs you.”

Gibbs didn’t even bother giving a reason, just left McGee and David in the bullpen. “What’s up?”

“Danny asked me to go the presidential dinner as his plus one.”

Now Gibbs understood and it suggested the relationship was a little more serious than he knew. He was guessing it was only just catching up to Tony. After all, one not does bring a casual date to a Presidential Dinner.

“Go. You deserve it and Danny makes you happy doesn’t he?”

Tony grinned and both Ducky and Gibbs knew everything in that one smile. They had just seen his genuine smile that was blinding and considering the agent was good at hiding his feelings - it was rather startling when he didn’t bother to hide them. “He does.”

Gibbs nodded. “So what caused the freakout?”
“Photographers will be present.” Tony reminded him and Gibbs now understood the problem. All it would take would be one photograph to hit the papers and that would be it. No more undercover roles.

“You are worth more than your undercover skills Tony and you know it. You can train newbies, it will be like training McGee all over again.” He added with a wicked smirk. “Plus I know you’ve been thinking about teaching the undercover course that FLETC keeps hassling you about.”

Tony snorted when an amusing thought hit him. “Whose reaction are you looking forward to most?”

Gibbs, Palmer, and Ducky spoke at the same time. “Vance!”

Tony had gone all out for the dinner. This was going to be a dinner with some of the most powerful people in Washington and Tony knew the power of a good suit. It was like its own piece of armour. He had chosen a Zegna Blue Evening Suit that just looked effortlessly classy. It was similar to the suit he’d worn in Italy to the opera and knew Daniel would appreciate the symmetry.

Daniel was meeting him at his and they were taking the Air-Force car to the event. Daniel adored the fact that even though Tony was insatiably curious about just what he did with the military he didn’t dig. In Tony’s own words, “I understand secrets that need to be kept.”

Daniel knocked on his door and Tony kissed him chastely. It was so not what he wanted to do but it wouldn’t do to go to the White House looking debauched. “You look fantastic.” Tony told his lover.

Danny actually had this adorable little red tinge to the tops of his ears. “Well, you look stunning and I will be the envy of all who will attend.”
Tony grabbed his hand. “Then it’s time to go and knock it of the park.”

The dinner was fantastic as you would expect from the chefs at the White House. Tony got to discover that Daniel knew very powerful people. It was an illuminating evening but no one judged Tony. He held his own in the conversations and Daniel never left him alone.

The highlight of the evening had to be when President Hayes and his wife stopped to chat to them. Daniel introduced Tony as his partner and the President shook his hand. Tony could hear the photographer take the shot but didn’t care. He was too busy laughing at the First Lady. It was a great candid shot and the one that was to be used for the PR of the whole event. It just so happened to further the President’s equality bill.

“So you and Dr. Jackson? My, that is too hot for words.”

DiNozzo grinned. “Thank you, ma’am. I am rather fond of Danny myself.”

“Just how did you two meet?”

Some might be scared by the way the First Lady seemed to want to gossip with them, not Tony. He just took it in his stride. “We meet in Italy on the beach. He was staring at me playing a game and I demanded that he take me for coffee.”

Daniel smiled. “It is true Mrs. Hayes but we haven’t let each other go since.”

Laura smiled at the couple. “Nor should you. Although, I insist I get a chance to dance with both of you this evening.”

Tony smiled radiantly. “We can’t refuse the request of such a beautiful and refined Lady.”

The President chuckled. “I like you Agent DiNozzo.”

“Thank you, Mr. President.”

Daniel waited until they were alone. “You okay?”
Tony nodded still a bit dazed. “Did the President say he liked me?”

Daniel nodded. “What’s not to like? ... How about a dance before the First Lady decides to cut in.”

Tony nodded wanting to spend every moment with Danny and not caring what anyone else thought. He was done caring and reached a time in his life where people could accept the real him, or leave him the hell alone. “Sure thing.”

The song turned to a slow one, so it was less a dance and just an excuse for couples to hold each other and say. Daniel whispered into Tony’s ears. “Thank you for coming.”

Tony smiled and let Danny know something. “Danny, I love you, of course I would come.”

“I love you, too.”

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Tony walked into headquarters the next day to see Gibbs staring at the other two members of their team as if he wanted to shoot them. “Boss?”

Gibbs rolled his eyes. “They are debating your evening and that is more important than a dead marine.”

Tony winced because wow, there was stupid and then there was suicidal. “I had no idea that my private life could cause such a buzz.”

“You met the President?” McGee said almost accusatory.

Tony shrugged and rolled with it, after all, he had no cure for jealousy. “Yeah I did. And the First
Lady is a great dancer. Although, Danny wasn’t happy when she stole me for two whole dances.”

“Danny,” Ziva said slowly. “Is a man.”

Tony rolled his eyes. “Yes, I did notice that fairly early on. We’ve been seeing each other for a while. Besides, I told you about him and you dismissed it as a lie and I didn’t care enough to correct your assumptions.”

Gibbs smirked as he sipped his coffee. He had been waiting for Tony to have his day for awhile. He deserved this and was glad to get a ringside seat. The only thing missing was a beer and some popcorn to enjoy the show.

“You’re gay?” McGee said incredulous and he was pointing at the photo of Tony standing next to Danny whilst talking to the Hayes.

Tony raised a cool eyebrow. “It is the twenty-first century McInsensitive. Do you need another training session with the DOD lady?”

McGee flushed. “No, of course not. It is just you - Mr. God’s gift to women - is gay?”

Tony looked to Gibbs. “Yeah, it seems Agent McGee does need a refresher on workplace discrimination and inclusion. We should probably send him back to FLETC for some more work on assumptions and how to see beyond the surface as well.”

Gibbs nodded. “Agreed.”

Ziva wasn’t done. “You are not gay. This is a ruse.”

Tony rolled his eyes because wow, talk about stubborn. “Looks like you’ll be tagging along with McGee. Look Ziva, I love Daniel with my whole heart. Now if you have a problem working with a gay SFA now is your time to ask for a transfer.”
They flushed but Gibbs and DiNozzo knew they weren’t done. Tony had no idea that the idea of him dating another guy would break them so badly. They hadn’t even picked up on the little photo caption that said Dr.’s Jackson and DiNozzo with President Hayes and his wife, Laura. Oh well, he would steel himself for that inevitable meltdown from the duplicitous duo when they figured it out.

Life stayed much the same, Tony and Danny had busy lives but made time for each other. Danny used every excuse he could to come to Washington and all of Tony’s free time could be found in Colorado.

Well, that was until one weekend while he was with Daniel, he was pulled into a space conspiracy.
GQ and Dreadlocks (Ronon Dex)

GQ and Dreadlocks

Tony got off the helicopter that was supposed to take him to the Seahawk and frowned. He’d been exhausted after the last case as well as having to pack with no time to rest and had fallen asleep shortly after lift-off. Not even the refueling stops had disturbed him and he’d only woken up when the wheels hit the ground some ten hours later. This was no ship, a huge mountain but no sea for miles around. “Oooookaaaayyy. I think we took a wrong turn somewhere.”

There was a snort behind him and he saw a two-star general and his old director, Tom Morrow standing there. “No mistake. We decided to take advantage of Vance’s prejudice against cops. Stick around, we have a mountain of forms for you to sign to raise your security level and then ... then, I think I might just have found the one thing that will finally get you to accept my offer.”

Tony followed in a daze but taking everything in with eager eyes and ears. Upon hearing a most fantastical and brilliant tale about aliens, cool technologies and crazy bad guys he was struck by a random thought and started to laugh. “My God, whoever thought to use Wormhole Extreme as plausible deniability was a genius.”

O’Neill snickered remembering that case. “Believe me, when you read the report on that one you will find it crazier.”

Tony wondered one thing. “So where do you want me? And as what?”

Morrow rolled his eyes hearing some insecurity there and he was well aware of the reasons. He had a few things to say and if he got a chance he was going to tear Gibbs a new one, old friends or not. “Okay, Shepard chose how she was going to die and did do at least one honourable thing during that whole mess... She kept you and David away.”

Tony looked up feeling the guilt easing somewhat and he already looked a few years younger. O’Neill nodded his agreement seeing some of the shadows in Tony’s eyes lifting. “I agree completely with Morrow. Now, I have a very cool ship but it is in a galaxy far, far away. It has a rather large Marine contingent and a too curious science staff - so I need a cool calm investigator
who can support the expedition leader. You up for the job?”

Tony’s eyes shone. This was an adventure that he wasn’t going to turn down. “Where do I sign and how quick can I go and tell Vance to shove his job up his arse?”

Morrow snorted seeing Tony’s old enthusiasm spark back into his eyes. “If you will allow an old man some fun we can take my jet to Dulles and then my chopper back to the Navy Yard.”

“Yes Sir.”

O’Neill hated the fact that he wasn’t going to be there because from the reports he was hearing the guy sounded like a dick and O’Neill hated all douches on principle. Still, Tom was a fishing buddy and would enjoy retelling the tale when they next saw each other.

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Vance saw the chopper touchdown on his helipad and wondered just what the Homeland Director wanted. He flushed in anger at seeing his agent step off the chopper too. What the hell did DiNozzo think he was doing disobeying orders?

Morrow smirked internally. “Good to see you, Leon. We need to step into your office to discuss a few matters.”

Vance nodded to acknowledge the Homeland Director but his opening gambit was directed toward Tony. “DiNozzo you better have a hell of an explanation or you are going to lose your job quicker than you can blink.”

DiNozzo regarded him coolly. “You misunderstand Director. We are discussing me.”

As soon as they stepped into Vance’s office Vance picked up a toothpick. He knew this meeting was going to stress him out. “So there is a good reason why you are not on the Seahawk?”
DiNozzo didn’t smile or react which bothered Vance - this was not what his profile of DiNozzo suggested. “Well, I stepped on the helicopter accepting my demotion and punishment to the Seahawk. Only when I stepped off the chopper there seemed to have been a communication error as I was not on the Seahawk. By coincidence, I happened to run into Director Morrow who offered me a job commensurate with my skill and experience level and I accepted.”

“You can’t just quit!” Vance roared.

DiNozzo was still calm. “Yes I can and why are you upset? I got the distinct impression from our last chat that this is what you wanted.”

Morrow decided to interject and he would be having words with SecNav Davenport because his choice of Director could do with additional scrutiny. “Leon it is a done deal. Do not make waves as the President is the one who has signed off on this.”

Vance was bewildered but refused to show it. He had sent DiNozzo away to cool his heels and flex his authority so that the agent would understand who was the boss at NCIS. This was not what he intended at all but all his plans were now for naught. “So you are just leaving?”

DiNozzo smiled and it was a change in his whole being. “Yeah I am, I am doing something for myself. Goodbye, Director.”

He didn’t say any of the polite falsehoods about how it was a pleasure to work with you, or, any of the other platitudes. Even with his undercover skills, he doubted he would have been able to sell it.

Morrow smiled as he said this knowing Tony deserved the chance to say a few goodbyes. “Why not say goodbye to your colleagues? I should imagine you have a few things you want to say.”

Tony slipped away as quietly as he came. First of all, he headed down to autopsy. He wanted to say goodbye to Ducky.

“Hello, Anthony. Forgive me, I am always pleased to see you but shouldn’t you be on the Seahawk by now?”
Tony chuckled knowing what the medical examiner meant and didn’t take it to heart. “I planned to be but a few things have changed. I got an offer and for the first time in five years I found myself saying yes.”

Palmer looked up from the inventory. “Oh thank god. Please tell me they’ll actually respect you?”

Tony chuckled because no one would believe Palmer could be feisty. “Yeah, Jimmy but I’m here to say goodbye. It’s a foreign posting I’m afraid and I will be able to email but not much else.”

Ducky looked sad because he hoped Gibbs would see sense. Too bad, Anthony did first and realised there were places around that would appreciate him more. It was a crying shame as Ducky was well aware what a positive influence Anthony used to have on Jethro. He had not been a good friend to Tony when Gibbs had run away so even though he was sad, he found himself saying. “I wish you every luck Anthony. You deserve it and do try to write once in awhile.”

Anthony grinned. “I will Ducky, stay well.” Turning to Jimmy. “Thanks for everything, Autopsy Gremlin. I’ll be in touch when I can.”

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Tony headed down to the forensics lab. “Hey, Abby.”

“TONY!”

Tony was glad of the distance as it probably protected his hearing. This was not going to be fun but she had been someone who had been dear to him and at one time, he’d thought of her as his little sister. “What’s going on? You coming home?”

“No, Ab’s I’m not,” Tony said softly. “The Director hates me and as of two hours ago ... I am now a Homeland Agent.”

Abs sat down stunned. “But what about the team, our family?”

Tony sat with her. “Families move apart. You know this Ab’s. This is a great opportunity for me and my career, plus you know things just haven’t been right for a while now with the team. In our line of work, that’s too dangerous. I still care and I will email when I can but due to the posting it may be a while before I can reply”
“You better Mister.” She said with a pout and hug.

Tony hated how abrupt and awkward the ending for him and Abby was but he had changed, and sadly, the scientist had not.

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Gibbs was the last one he had to see and Tony had planned it that way. He had no way to predict how this would go as he no longer understood his boss. Still, there was no point in delaying the inevitable - he walked into the bullpen. “Hey, Gibbs.”

“DiNozzo. What are you doing here?” Gibbs asked him, cold towards him still.

Tony let it go reminding himself of what Morrow told him. “Transferring agencies. Your Director is mad as hell. Mine is pleased as punch.”

Gibbs could hear the line in the sand - DiNozzo was already separating himself from NCIS. He was glad that DiNozzo was leaving the agency. His behaviour would make many people believe he was a bastard but DiNozzo was too loyal to him so unless he completely embodied that second B, DiNozzo would never leave.

He shook Tony’s hand. “I wish you luck Agent DiNozzo.”

Tony returned the handshake choosing to remember times gone by. “You too. Agent Gibbs.”

Tony left the bullpen with his head held high - and tellingly he didn’t look back to anyone.

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Tony’s mind hadn’t stopped absorbing facts and training since he’d gone back to the mountain. The marines who were going to Atlantis with him liked the fact that they had an agent who wanted to train with them. At first, they thought he would be as useful as a team mascot and then they realised that whilst not a marine - DiNozzo could keep up, they kind of wanted to adopt him.

“Why are you grinning DiNozzo? We just ran five miles.” The new military second in command asked him sounding somewhat exasperated.

DiNozzo was beaming from ear to ear and he just knew this one would cause trouble. “Because I can. Vala healed my lungs and knees and I feel as fit as when I almost went Pro back in college.”

“What sport?” Lorne asked out of curiosity.


Lorne shook his head. “Well, you will make sure the marines don’t slack off. I know you came from NCIS so I presume you’re at least a reasonable shot.” There was a challenge in his voice but he needed to know what the civilians could do.

DiNozzo grinned. “Between you and I, my ex-boss was a marine sniper and trained us to shoot like him. He had inventive methods involving your mobiles and other treasured items.”

Lorne smirked and saw the opportunity to win a few bets. “So if we go down to the shooting range we can make a few bets and win?”

DiNozzo grinned at him. “Sure thing Major.”

Tony left to prepare for his daily meeting with Weir, Sheppard and McKay as a way to get up to speed before they reached Atlantis. The briefings were done in Caldwell’s briefing room and the Commander of the spaceship would join them.
“So ... problems?” Weir asked.

Tony shrugged looking to Sheppard as they’d discussed something yesterday. He was aware of the less than cordial relationship between Caldwell and Sheppard. He had no doubt they would be professional but doing favours wouldn’t be happening anytime soon. “Sheppard and I were discussing if there’s a way to help the marines let off steam? Everyone’s going a little stir-crazy.”

Sheppard snorted because the newbies were so green they were ridiculous. “Yeah, too much energy and a little too much like Wraithbait.”

Caldwell nodded his agreement. “I’m this close to asking McKay about the viability of making a space suit to keelhaul them.”

Lorne smirked at the way McKay brightened at Caldwell’s thought. Lorne was smart enough to redirect the thoughts. “They are just adjusting to the fact that their commanders are zoomies and scary.”

Sheppard shrugged, they soon shut up after they read the action reports from their first year. He was in awe of the way DiNozzo gently slid the issue in as a way to address it when the whole leadership team was present. “We should start training early. Colonel, could we commandeer the empty cargo bay?”

Caldwell nodded. “With pleasure.”

No one missed the smirk between Sheppard and DiNozzo. Weir smirked right back at them both. “You won’t be able to pull that trick too often gentleman.”

“Won’t have to.”

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Tony wondered what all the commotion was because this was a level beyond Atlantis’ normal level of crazy. He loved the fact that he had only been in the city two months and he was already a good judge of levels of crazy days. He headed into Liz’s office knowing that she would be able to shed light on the situation.

Weir was unhappy. “He is bringing an alien to the city.”

DiNozzo could see why that might freak her out a little. “Sheppard loves this city and she loves him so there is no way he would voluntarily bring a dangerous threat here.”

Weir knew this, she did. She was also aware that this, Ronon, had taken her first contact team hostage when they first met. It made her predisposed to be somewhat unkeen on him. “We’ll see, I want you to give me an honest threat assessment of him as soon as you can.”

“Yes, ma’am.”

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In the infirmary, Tony walked in to see Sheppard sitting by their newest visitor’s bed. And wow, he had no idea that muscles could be on top of muscles in such a delicious way. Dreadlocks looked so peaceful in sleep. “So I didn’t expect you to be standing sentinel against your previous captor?”

Sheppard looked up. “You doing the threat assessment?”

Tony nodded because there was no reason to lie. After all, it was part of his skillset and he would be the most impartial of the people in the city. “Yep, that’s me. So talk me through why you let him come back to Atlantis.”

Sheppard sighed. “Yes, he took me hostage but that’s because that is what his life has taught him to do.”
Tony nodded to say keep going.

“I didn’t know it until Ronon told me but the Wraith play sports. They keep what they call runners and this guy was one of them. They put a tracker in him as they obviously don’t play fair and hunt him for sport. He did that day in day out for seven years DiNozzo. I damn well made sure the tracker was removed, the scar was so bad because he tried to take it out of himself with his hands and a knife ... No anesthetic as that would have dulled his senses.”

Tony shuddered because that was a horrific image. He hadn’t met a Wraith yet and whilst he knew he would more than likely meet one eventually, he was more than okay delaying that for as long as possible. “Does he want to stay?”

Sheppard shrugged as he had no idea. “No clue, but he has no one. The Wraith decimated his entire world. Why not stay here?”

“Is he a risk?” Tony asked in all seriousness because if there was one person from Earth who understood the Pegasus Galaxy - it was Sheppard. Tony had read all the reports from the first year and could also read between the lines about what wasn’t reported. He also wouldn’t ignore that out of the three official Military Commanders assigned to Atlantis - Sheppard was the only one who managed to survive and even flourish in the role.

Sheppard had a wry grin. “We have an accord.”

Tony just gave him a look. “That’s great. I’ll be sure to tell that to Dr. Weir... I just can see how well that will go.”

Sheppard snickered having had more than one of those meetings himself. “Okay, so I will give you more. This is how we sell it.”

Ronon was close to Sheppard and would talk sparsely with Rodney and Teyla. Tony hadn’t really had time to get to know many on base with all the work he’d been catching up on. You wouldn’t believe the amount of paperwork a base in the ass end of another galaxy could generate for the US military. Tony had made best friends with Major Lorne and between them, they had righted the ship
and got everything organised.

Tony walked into the canteen and got a drink and some food. Beckett was scary good at finding out if he missed a meal and was not shy in telling him off.

Tony was surprised when someone sat opposite him. It was Ronon sitting there in all his dreadlock glory. Tony didn’t blink or make a big deal of it.

He got a gruff question by way of greeting. “So I have you to thank for being able to stay here?”

Tony shook his head. “Nope. I just did the right thing.”

Ronon nodded and seemed unsure whether to ask his next question. Tony knew the only way to make it easier was to bulldoze through any awkward conversations and to just have them. “You okay?”

Ronon stared at him for a moment. “I want to know if you share pillows with anyone.”

Tony didn’t flush but he did smile because wow, that was not what he was expecting. He had to smile guessing what the phrase meant. “No, I have no one I share my bed with.”

“Why not? You’re really pleasing to look at and people like being around you.”

Tony did flush at that because whilst he was no stranger to how he looked - It had been awhile since someone had been so blunt in chasing him. “Thanks - you are not so bad yourself.”

Ronon frowned and Tony didn’t like that look on him. “Is this like that stupid rule Sheppard’s men have to follow?”

Wow. Way to dismiss DADT in one easy step. Tony had to smile and shake his head. “You will find my people are strangely reserved about talking about who they share a bed with.”
Ronon looked over at a bunch of marines he’d been helping to train and raised an eyebrow.

Tony could guess what he was thinking and wondered how he could tactfully phrase what he needed to say. Ah well, he would just say it. “You will soon learn that the way marines talk to each other is not how everyone speaks with each other.” Tony paused but continued. “They have a unique turn of phrase, they’re brilliant soldiers and fantastic men but not the best group you should learn about earth customs from.”

Ronon smirked letting him know he was more than aware and being sly about playing the alien card. Tony snickered. “Oh, you are going to be so much fun.”

“Didn’t I see you running this morning?” Ronon asked in a sudden change of subject.

Tony nodded surprised that anyone noticed. He ran one of the approved safe routes that were marked out but he was still adjusting to his new limits with his improved lung capacity. “Yeah you did ... Want to run together tomorrow?”

“Sure.” Ronon definitely liked the idea of seeing Tony in the running clothes humans wore. Those fabrics did show all the best attributes of people.

Tony and Ronon left the food hall together and both could hear Rodney say to Sheppard as they passed the other pair. “GQ and Dreadlocks? ... since when?”

*Tony liked the sound of that and so did Ronon. No matter how many of the new women or men tried to get either man’s attention - they soon learned that GQ and Dreadlocks only had eyes for each other.*
Tony goes to Eureka (Jack Carter)

Jack Carter was a US Marshall and proud of his job. He was very good at it, even if he had to use his skills to track down his hellion of a daughter. Still, the car was fixed and they were now on their way back to LA from the strange town they’d ended up, Eureka. He wasn’t quite sure how he’d explain it to his fiance.

“What’s that sigh for?”

Jack rolled his eyes. “I was wondering how to even try and explain this weekend to Tony.”

Zoe brightened. “I like him, he’s good for you Dad. You don’t have such a stick up your ass anymore.”

Jack wanted to wince at such a phrase but it was meant to be positive, he thinks. “Okay, I will take it. So you’re not angry at me for getting engaged?”

He was trying to gently figure out what caused this latest bout of running away. He had no doubt that Abby, his ex-wife, would blame him but he was no longer trying to carry the weight of the divorce on his shoulders. Tony had made him see that just because he liked his job - it didn’t make him a bad person.

“Oh my god! You’re getting all gooey, you’re thinking about him aren’t you?” Zoe said more of a demand than a question.

Jack smiled and it was gooey but he didn’t care. “Yeah, I am. He was very understanding when I said I couldn’t come to Washington to see him as you had run away from your mom’s. He offered to get on a plane to help you know.”

Zoe flushed with guilt because she was aware of how little free time Tony got. “I’m sorry. Do you think I can call him?”

Jack knew Washington was three hours ahead. “Sure thing but don’t be bratty if he’s busy with a case.”

~*~

Tony was sitting down on his couch grateful for the chance to close his eyes. The case had been hellish and he’d really hoped Jack would have been able to see him but Zoe came first and that was how it should be. His phone rang and he checked the display. “Hey, hellion. What’s up, I’m guessing your Dad found you.”

Zoe said something in a rush. “I am soooo soorrry. I forgot Dad was going to see you.”

Tony’s heart expanded because that was typical Zoe, she wanted to be brash and angry but her heart was too big. He was usually terrible with kids but he understood Zoe and she never made him feel awkward. “It’s okay Zoe, you will always come first for both of us. We’ve discussed this before and you know this.”
And it was true. Tony hated being stuck in Washington when Zoe was upset. Zoe cringed at the gentle rebuke. “Still, I’m sorry. Next trip you should be with us, Tony. We miss you.”

Tony chuckled, knowing what that sly tone meant. “You’ve just pulled up at your mom’s, right?”

Zoe was chirpy. “I have no idea what you mean. It’s not my fault mom’s boyfriend is not as hot as you. I better see you the next time you fly down to LA.”

Tony’s heart warmed hearing Zoe hear that and he wanted her to know they were okay. “Bye hellion and you know we’re going shopping for your wedding outfit next time.”

Zoe hung up and got out of the car. “Bye, Dad. See you next weekend for the wedding shopping.” She added practically sneering at her mother as she barged past.

Jack was speechless because wow, she was mad at her mom and wasn’t too sure why. He could guess - this type of overt favouritism. “So ... You’ve talked about redefining the custody agreement?”

Abby flushed which was a huge tell. “I ... Don’t know what you want me to say. You are marrying another man who lives in Washington, I won’t lose Zoe.”

Jack rolled his eyes as this was a familiar problem, for a therapist, Abby was crap at communicating with him at least. “Abby, Tony and I are figuring out options but it looks like we’re settling in LA. Tony adores Zoe and as you can hear, it is a two-way street.”

Abby snorted. “And yet she hates Lucas.”

Jack honestly had no advice to give his ex-wife on her boyfriend. He was just amazed that Tony had come into his life and chosen to be with him. Jack was not a stupid man, and both he and Tony made sure their schedules and jobs fit around their relationship instead of the other way around. His job was hard and took a lot of his time and he knew Abby hated it. He didn’t know what to say, he had tried with Abby, god he did, for Zoe’s sake, but she was not Very Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo. Tony was special to him and five years later they were as strong as ever even if they weren’t out at work for safety reasons.

~*~

Jack was back in his LA office and catching up on his paperwork, trying to put his strange weekend behind him. It didn’t matter what branch of law enforcement you were in - the paperwork was always a killer. The clacking of heels on the floor made him look up to see who his visitor was and he could admit he was mildly surprised.

“Hello, Dr Blake. What can I do for you today?”

“I’m here about your job promotion.” She handed him an official DOD piece of paper pulled from her briefcase. “Congratulations.”

Jack frowned because he had no idea that he was up for a job promotion. He didn’t want or need one. He was happy in his life, he had Tony, Zoe any time he was allowed and his job gave him the challenges to keep himself from getting bored. “Er, I wasn’t aware I needed one.”
Dr Blake shrugged. “As you are aware, we need a new sheriff, you are highly qualified and handled the town’s eccentricities just fine.”

Carter looked up in disbelief. “And are you equipped to handle my daughter and fiance when I tell them I am being dragged into the middle of nowhere?”

Alison rolled her eyes, she had been disappointed by the what the background check had found but she had a plan. “Well, the lawyers in town will get your custody agreement reviewed to allow for your new circumstances.”

Jack wouldn’t hold out hope but that would be amazing. “And Tony? What is your plan for Tony?”

Alison shrugged. “He has the clearance level already high enough to know although his file suggested that he would refuse a job offer. The DOD are interested in him as an agent but have never seen a way to get him. In fact, he will need to sign confidentiality forms but you can tell him about Eureka.”

Jack rolled his eyes. “Email me the offer and we’ll have a chat.”

“You would do that for the DOD?” She asked surprised, he hardly seemed enthusiastic himself.

Carter snorted. “No, I would do it for my future marriage that you seem determined to ruin before we even start.”

Alison shrugged because her superiors had sent her the details about Agent DiNozzo saying they were keen to have him work for them but that he’d always refused all offers to leave NCIS in the past. This would be quite the coup if it worked out and she wouldn’t have to lift a finger. “I’ll email it to you and I look forward to seeing you next Monday.”

Jack snorted. “No, I want the lawyer’s number today. My ex-wife seems to think the custody arrangement needs to be revisited and I’m not going anywhere until the situation with Zoe is sorted out.”

~*~

Jack didn’t bother to wait for the offer - he was on the phone immediately to Tony. “Can you talk?”

“For you always, just let me go somewhere quiet.” Tony said concerned because Jack never phoned him when he was at work and there was something in his voice that set off alarm bells. “It’s not, Zoe, is it?”

It was that type of question that made Jack love Tony a little more. “No, our little hellion went back to Abby as quiet as a mouse proclaiming she wanted to have another fun weekend but insisted that you needed to be with us next time. I agreed.”

Tony chuckled just knowing how well that would have gone. “Glad to hear it. So what has you freaked?”

Jack sucked in a breath hating that he had to have this conversation on a phone. “I’ve been promoted.” He knew he sounded morose considering it was supposed to be a promotion but he couldn’t be positive about it until he’d spoke to Tony.
“Oookkaaaaay! Should I not be congratulating you because you sound like this is the worst thing to happen to you.” Tony responded trying to understand the situation.

Jack sighed. “In our little adventure this weekend we crashed into this crazy scientific town. What I am telling you is way classified but the DOD says you have the clearance so who am I to argue?”

Tony was rubbing his face trying to piece together what he was being told. “Hang on. I’m going into an empty conference room. Put me on video.”

Jack was so glad that his lover was good at predicting what he needed and also thankful, yet again, that they’d organised a secure line between their two phones. “Boy am I glad to see your face.”

“Always happier to see you.” Tony responded. He would have said a hell of a lot more but despite his larger-than-life persona, he was actually pretty quiet about his private life. “So what’s wrong with the promotion?”

Jack pouted. “Well for starters it is in the middle of nowhere, Oregon. They are crazy stupid despite having a bucket load of IQ points. Oh, and I have no choice about the reassignment.”

Tony frowned, understanding what was going on. Gibbs had just come back from his siesta and there was no reason to stay. He was considering what his options were that would put him in LA. “Okay, so I was going to take a job in LA to be closer to you and Zoe. Is there any job in Oregon for me? I could be one of your deputies.” Tony finished in a sly tone trying to raise Jack’s spirits.

Jack won’t lie that parts of him stirred at that suggestion. “Funny you should mention that the DOD liaison mentioned her agency wanted to offer you a job but had never found the right incentive.”

Tony snorted because no, none of the agencies offered had ever found the right incentive. The DOD just might have found it, though, his fiance. “Yeah, sending you to Mayberry would do it. Send me the details and I’ll look it over and make the calls.”

“We’re moving to Oregon?” Jack said, not sure how it was this easy.

Tony grinned, eyes a little damp. “Yeah Jack, we’re moving to Eureka. I am not letting my fiance move without me.”

Jack smiled. “Good, because I gotta tell you that I wasn’t keen on leaving you behind either. And how did you know I was talking about Eureka?”

Tony grinned. “Very special agent remember? Together was the agreement we made. True partners and I stand by it.”

“Me too, Stallion.” Jack signed off with. “We’ll talk later and start to make plans.”

Tony didn’t care where he was. “I love you and we’ll talk later.”

Tony heard the door open as he signed off and then there was a sneer. “Another of your bombos?”

Tony was leaving and he didn’t realise the weight that would take off his shoulders. Gibbs was back so the MCRT had a leader, the two junior agents thought they were above him and he was done caring. Jack actually cared about him and he was looking forward to settling in Eureka with him. It was crazy and Tony never thought he’d be willing to risk his heart like he had with Wendy but here
he was.

“Jack wouldn’t like to be called a bimbo, Ziva and please show some respect - that is my fiance you’re talking about.”

Oh, Tony would treasure the shocked look on her face forever. It was just that precious. “What’s the matter - cat got your tongue?”

She forgot why she had even come. “You, you are not gay! You are in love with me.”

Tony snorted in disbelief because after all the crap she had pulled during Gibbs’ siesta - he didn’t even like her, let alone love her. She was very obtuse or, just preferred to rewrite history to suit her whims. He wasn’t too sure which it was but the brutal truth was, he didn’t care either. “No, Ziva, I do not. I have a fiance, one that I have been with since not long after I was made SFA. You don’t hold a candle to Jack and you never will. Now if you excuse me, there are some things I need to organise.”

“What are they?” Ziva demanded like she had a right to know.

Tony called back sweetly. “None of your business.”

She called out. “Gibbs wants you to stock the truck.”

Tony snorted in disbelief and he was done playing Gibbs’ games. “The probie does that job. Always has. So intimidate McGee into it if you don’t want to do it.”

She shrugged. “I will tell Gibbs and you know he will not like it.”

Tony stopped and turned around so she could see his face to know it was serious. “Ziva, you are not hearing me ... I. Don’t. Care. I figured out my priorities and NCIS no longer ranks as my top one. Now, if you’ll excuse me - I have a lot I need to get done.”

Tony didn’t go to Director Shepard directly because he wanted to have all his ducks in a row in order to leave. So he went to autopsy. “Hey Ducky?”

“Hello, young Anthony, is everything alright?”

Tony smiled. “You know what ... Everything is great. I am finally taking that leap of faith you said I should.”

Ducky was sad but relieved all at the same time. Anthony had a few years ago shared the secret of his true relationship and the fact that his lover was a man. Ducky had been glad the man had someone and would often over tea share stories of his breaks with Jack and his daughter. “I see. So what do you need?”

Tony smiled sheepishly. “A quiet room so I can talk with the DOD before I talk with the Director.”

Ducky would do so much more but he was happy to acquiesce to that agreement. “I am sorry Jethro hasn’t seen the forest for the trees.”

Now to anyone else the idiom may be lost - not Tony. He remembered his mother saying things like that to him and he would always laugh and ask what he meant. Tony knew Ducky felt bad for how he acted when Gibbs was away. Tony knew it was anger at Gibbs and as Ducky had apologised - he
never held a grudge. He needed Ducky to know that. “Duck, I never held it against you. You lost your good friend too.”

Ducky patted his shoulder. “I know you don’t which makes it worse somehow. Go and make your phone call. I shall distract Gibbs if he comes looking for you.”

Tony nodded in thanks and took a deep breath as he dialled. “Hello, this is Agent Anthony DiNozzo, I was told to call this office.”

“Ah, Yes. So what made you take the offer?”

Tony saw no reason in hiding anymore and wanted to start their new life with their relationship out in the open so he explained everything. After a brief conversation and some negotiation, he walked out of the office in a daze. The army would be informing Director Shepard that as of midday today - Anthony DiNozzo would be transferred to the Department of Defence. He wasn’t sure what to think but he now also had a promotion - They wanted Dr Blake to transfer back to being one of the working scientists and so the DOD needed a liaison that was stationed at egghead central looking after their interests. He couldn’t wait to tell Jack - he knew what he would say. “You are one of the eggheads too, Dr DiNozzo, but I love you anyway.”

Ducky looked up from his paperwork. “Everything sorted?”

Tony grinned but there was a difference - this was a true smile. “Yeah, Ducky. It is great, I’ll be leaving Washington by the end of the week though.”

Ducky held his hand out. “I wish you luck and happiness, Anthony. And do remember an old man once in awhile.”

Tony took the hand but pulled him into a hug. “Of course I will, I can’t wait to bring Zoe to visit you.”

Jimmy came out from his books. “What changed your mind?”

Tony grinned. “Jack did. I was going to leave once Gibbs looked a little stronger but I figured I was moving to LA and joining the FBI. Oh well, small adjustment but it looks like it’ll work out even better. I’m so happy right now Autopsy Gremlin.”

Jimmy took Tony’s hand that was offered in a handshake. “I’ll miss you, Tony. Keep in touch.”

~*~

Tony had made his way to Global Dynamics, in a burst of irony - he actually arrived in town before Jack and headed straight for his new office. An excitable scientist, Fargo, greeted him. He was the new assistant to the Director, who was also newly arrived.

Tony knew who that was from the files, Dr Nathan Stark, Nobel Prize winner. “Dr Stark, it’s a pleasure to meet you. I am the new DOD liaison, Agent Anthony DiNozzo.”

Stark frowned. “What happened to Alison?”

Tony shrugged. “Well, that is something you will have to ask her. I am not getting involved between you and your ex, Doctor Stark.”
Stark looked at him and Tony had no doubt that many may wilt under that glare, not Tony, though. Tony waited him out to make whatever opinion he cared to. “How does a DOD agent afford Zegna?”

Tony was amused by the Director for now. “Good investments.”

Stark snorted. “Touche. We should continue this conversation in my office.”

Tony heard two voices bickering. He didn’t glare at the woman but she had no right to be looking at Jack in that way. “Hey, Sheriff Carter, fancy meeting you here.”

Jack smirked but rather than take a hint - the conversation soon derailed. Jack actually shared an eye-roll with Tony because, wow, talk about hypocrisy. They had spent two hours in a video-conference with a relationship auditor and someone didn’t see this being a problem?

“You didn’t tell me you were moving back to Eureka!” Blake said in shock. Tony and Jack were standing by looking awkward. This was exactly why he had said to Stark that he had no intention of getting involved between them.

“Same house, same job, moved already. I meant to call.” Stark replied in a tone of voice that suggested he had no intention of doing any of those things.

Tony and Jack got bored of the tension being so thick that you could cut it with a knife. “So Jack and I will go and get lunch, figure out where we’re living and when we get back ... You can have talked this out so we can all work together.”

Jack grinned. “This is why I love you ... Let’s go stud.”

At that, Stark broke the starefest with his ex and looked over. “You’re together?”

Tony grinned, crooked and in-love. “Yeah, five years nearly and still going strong. We were getting ready to marry before our sudden promotions but we’ll adjust.”

~*~

Jack was a good sheriff - he managed to get out of egghead central before he kissed Tony senselessly. Tony loved just how good he was at that and his body was humming just from the kiss. “Damn, I wanted to do that as soon as I saw you in Stark’s office.”

Jack chuckled. “I can’t believe we’re finally in the same place.”

Tony grabbed his hand. “Let’s go eat.”

They found this cafe, where the chef was good as advertised. Jack was talking animatedly, retelling his first adventure in Eureka. Tony was smiling as he ate his own cannoli. “So where are we living exactly?”

Jack winced. “Well, I asked and according to Fargo, there is only one available house. I’ve seen it ... It’s a repurposed nuclear bunker that has been turned into the first state of the art computer controlled habitat.”

Tony shrugged it off, although, he was sure he’d watched one too many movies where this was the start. “As long as the system isn’t called Hal 9000 ... I’m not too nervous.”
Jack smirked. “You should see the movie screen. It’s a whole wall.”

Tony pouted, his fiance knew his weak-point. “Yeah, and it’ll be great for football games.”

“That too,” Carter responded without missing a beat.

Any further conversations were stopped when two things happened at once. A plume of smoke appeared over Tony’s new place of work and ... a ghost-like man appeared in the middle of the cafe. The couple sighed before Jack said. “You got GD and I’ll take this?”

“Sure thing, let me know our new address at some point and I’ll see you tonight.” Tony finished, pecking Jack on the lips before racing off tonight.

“You betcha.”

The couple would soon learn to expect the unexpected - including Zoe arriving with her bags refusing to leave. They didn’t care because no matter what crazy event happened to occur on any given day Jack and Tony were in the same town, waking up in the same bed and could actually call each other husband.

That was a gift they would put up with a lot for.

Now with a sequel short: A Surprise Arrival
Death's One True Companion (Methos)

Can now be found as an expanded version here - Death’s One True Companion (Highlander TV-Methos)

Then

You would never believe it with how he acted but Anthony DiNozzo had been around for a long time now. He wasn’t just Italian-American, he had in fact been an original Roman from way back when. His first death had sucked big style - stabbed in the senate as a supporter of the rightful Emperor. Brutus really was a son of a bitch, a traitor and a coward - He was glad history got that right at least.

It had been even more of a surprise to wake up, spluttering from something nasty still in his mouth. As he opened his eyes, he noticed a smirking man waiting for him as he rejoined the world. He was not dressed like any self-respecting Roman would - in fact, he dressed more like Pluto and kept leaning attractively against the plinth. Tony may have just come back from the dead but his eyes still worked.

“You’re an immortal Antonius.” The man said with a bright grin like this was just the best news ever.

Antonius stood up throwing down the toga, not caring to stay in in the blood soiled clothes even if he was naked as a result. He didn’t know this guy, he was certainly not part of the senate so he asked. “Who are you, Pluto?”

Hell, Tony wasn’t judging, for the God of the Underworld, he sure was handsome.

The man shook his head staring in interest at the lean body shown to him. Antonius had lost any potential modesty back when he’d served in the army. The answer came from the Pluto-wannabe. “No, I am no God. My name is Methos and I am the one who will teach you how to stay alive.”

Methos was as good as his word and taught Antonius the ways of the sword - immortal style. Antonius had always thought he was pretty good with a sword, after all, he’d served in war campaigns and survived. Three training sessions with his new mentor and he’d realised he was very very wrong. He knew very little about how to use his sword when the other person wants to not just kill you but take your head.

Methos trained hard but rewarded him with untold pleasure when he did well. He learned all about the game immortals played and the consequences of not trying to play. It had only been two months
since his ‘awakening’ before he was challenged to his first duel. It turned out his will to live was stronger and the second his challenger lost his head - the lightning struck. The lightning was perhaps the oddest part of the game because when an immortal truly dies the victor inherits the memories and strengths of the loser.

Damn, Antonius didn’t know what a buzz it would feel like, the first quickening. He felt like he’d indulged in the best wines and imbibed way too much. Methos had found him bent over in the alley trying to get his bearings. Antonius felt giddy and high and invincible so he grabbed Methos and kissed him with his skin still tingling from the lightning. Kissing wasn’t the last thing they did that night but it did start the legend of Death and his companion.

All immortals had stories about the eldest immortal but the really wild stories revolved around Death’s companions. After all, what type of man/immortal did you have to be to grab and keep his attention? Tonius always listened to the stories with amusement, sharing his favourite ones with Methos.

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Now

Tony hated fever based deaths where it was a lingering slow demise. He could handle pain and by now there was no real fear of any passing - the bitch was the hallucinations and the flashbacks of your life. For an average human it wouldn’t be too bad but when you have as much history as Tony there were a lot of mistakes and sucky endings to relive.

Oh and for the record, saying an immortal can’t die was a misnomer. They could die - they just got back up unless you took their head. They would blend in with the people living and ‘die’ when it became necessary although the unplanned deaths sucked. Anthony started to keep a gruesome mental log of the ways he had been killed and which were the worst.

The one thing Tony could attest to is that growing older didn’t mean you got wiser. He and Methos were a weird couple in that they let each other go occasionally. They had been together well over a millennia so a break for a century or two just kept things fresh. Plus, when Methos got broody and guilty over his horsemen days - not even Antonius could get through to him. He didn’t try, he wanted and enjoyed a new adventure knowing his lover would find him once he was done sulking.

Tony was good at undercover roles while he was working in law enforcement because he had lived so many lives and had to be so many people. Tim would have a fit if he knew that Tony had spied for the American’s against the English during the revolution. It had sucked been caught because he
was betrayed but at least he’d picked the right side, or that Tony DiNozzo was not nearly as flamboyant as when he had become Robin of Locksley. He and Methos had been furious with each other and he’d had no idea that their lover’s tiff would eventually become the legend of Robin Hood against the evil Sheriff of Nottingham.

The game didn’t change but damn the times changed and fast. Tony was always impressed with how well men could attempt to kill each other. The weapons got all the more devastating and in the 19th and 20th century they truly managed to up the ante when it came to killing. Now Tony was aware of the hypocrisy in that he would chop off people’s heads when they challenged him. That was the key part - they challenged him and if they did they would lose. Tony, unlike his lover’s heyday, had never initiated the challenge against another immortal.

Tony looked up at the blue lights and knew why he was thinking about his lover and partner now even though they had not seen each other in over half a century.

Methos had split with Tony to go after a show society that tracked immortals. It was so dangerous that Adam, as Methos was now going by, refused to let him help. It had royally pissed him off and every modern life he’d led Tony made sure it was a law enforcement role. Tony didn’t give a shit how pretty he was - he was no one’s damsel and he had the sword collection to make up his argument with prejudice.

The first time Gibbs had seen his wall of swords - he’d got a raised eyebrow. Tony had shrugged it off and smirked saying, Highlander was an awesome movie and he loved swords. He had no idea which immortal blabbed but the watchers must have let it go on the grounds it gave plausible deniability. It had certainly helped Tony display the ‘antique’ swords he’d collected with a quirky explanation. He just hadn’t quite told anyone that he’d bought the swords new and they were actually used to make sure he didn’t lose his head.

The trouble this time was Tony had been caught by something that he couldn’t kill with swords - bacteria. Nasty little buggers as even with all the amazing medical discoveries they’d made - the pneumonic plague still killed eighty-five percent of the patients it infected. He hated the plague as this wouldn’t be the first time the plague had been responsible for one of his deaths. In his book of least favourite ways to die, plague ranked up there with the witch burning and the human sacrifice by that weird-ass tribe. It was the last time he would let Adam (as Methos had started to use by that point) choose where to settle.

He knew what that buzz meant and thank god he recognised the signature because he was not too sure how good a fight he could put up without killing himself. He didn’t need to as this was his
lover - he guessed Methos had found out somehow that he was dying - again. He didn’t care what others called him as they were just names but he loved it when Methos called him Antonius - it made him shiver. In a fun way, not the dying of the plague way.

Sure enough, Adam was sitting by his bed and Kate was getting agitated demanding to know who he was. Tony coughed weakly. “Leave it, Katie. He is mine.”

Kate looked confused but then took into account the body language and the look of worry on Adam’s face. “Oh, well I will leave you to it. I want to hunt the bastard down that made you this way in the first place.” She wanted to be angry that Tony had never said anything about his boyfriend but now was not the time, even she couldn’t be mad at a dying man.

Adam could get behind that type of thinking. “Please do, they should pay for hurting Antonius.”

Kate smirked. “Oh, Gibbs will make them pay alright. You just watch his six.”

Adam quirked his eyebrow in amusement. “Americans still have such funny turns of phrase.”

Tony started to chuckle because damn, Methos couldn’t sound more like a snob if he tried. He shouldn’t have chuckled as it started another coughing fit. “Git.”

Adam stroked his hand, wishing like crazy he could do more. “It is too bad you have close companions and you’ve ended up confined.”

Tony wished he could speak more because Adam was able to stay ahead of the game and blend so well because he stayed with the times. “No one says confined. I’m ill, probably dying.”

Adam sighed. “I know and this is not the reunion I had in mind.”

Tony smirked weakly. “Oh baby, when this is over we’re visiting a beach where it is warm. Hawaii.”

He should have conserved his voice as he started to cough. He ended up with the mask on his face and it sucked because all these measures were just prolonging his death. It was not like he was suicidal - he could recover fit and whole with no damage from death, the plague not so much.

Methos kissed the side of his face, unwilling to remove the mask in order to reach those wonderful
lips. “Rest Tonius, I won’t let anyone challenge you while you are weak.” He smirked. “And besides, you are so ill no one will question you too much about my appearance.”

Gibbs had been surprised by the man standing vigil over Tony. The man didn’t move a muscle but Gibbs could tell he was a soldier - this was someone who didn’t intend to let a threat close to Tony. Good.

“I didn’t know Tony had a guest.”

The man shrugged. “I am Tony’s old friend, Methos. I came as soon as I heard.”

Methos gave his real name as the man would assume it was a nickname. It was kind of ironic that the truth is what would throw an investigator off his scent. He didn’t want to compromise Adam Pearson as the identity still held and Tony could walk into that of his husband, Tony Pearson. This time, Tony would not be a shortened name and it wouldn’t be the first time Tony was a British person.

Tony held on for two more days to give the NCIS friends a chance to say goodbye to him and for the woman responsible to be caught. In the official medical records, Anthony DiNozzo Jnr dies at 12.21 at Bethesda with only Methos by his side. To begin with, Tony had thought about fighting and holding but Methos’ arrival was the sign that it was time to move on. He loved NCIS but Tony was Methos’ companion first and foremost and they had been apart for too long. It was time now for the next chapter of their life together to begin. Just a few loose ends left to tie up.

Someone was stupid enough to put a contract out on Gibbs and there was no way Tony would let anyone fulfil that contract. The bastards were using his death as a good time to get him as he was distracted by grief. Not on Tony’s Watch.

The MCRT were closing in on Ari, Gibbs was proud of what they had achieved considering they were still recovering from the shock of Tony’s death. He should have known one of his enemies would use his grief against him. Still, Ari Haswari was the one to decide now was the perfect time to play with Gibbs and those closest to him.

The rooftop was the first big lead in the cat and mouse game they were playing. As soon as they reached the rooftop in the rain - Gibbs realised his mistake. This was a sniper’s perfect kill zone - the dreaded red light ever so familiar to Gibbs actually flashed on Kate’s chest. He pulled her down to
the ground knowing it was a futile gesture ... Only the bullet never came.

Kate was on the floor trying to get her adrenaline surge under control. Gibbs had had a few of those in the past so he gave her a few seconds and used the time to re-evaluate some of his decisions he’d made in the last few days. Christ, DiNozzo would have had his head for some of the stunts he’d used to try and catch Ari.

It stopped now because he would not have Kate die for him no matter what orders the director gave her. He gave her hand up. “You’re not Secret Service anymore and I’m not the President. You don’t get to die for me.”

“Screw you Gibbs. Now as much as I hate to say this... Why am I not dead?”

Gibbs didn’t know but he knew the answer would lie in Ari’s little sniper nest. David is looking pensive as she knows there is something very wrong with her brother. Gibbs didn’t have to tell her there was only one reason a sniper didn’t take out his target and that was because he was taken out of the equation. So who would know the MCRT was in danger and choose to do something about it?

The nest was exactly where Gibbs predicted it would be. He entered with Todd on his six but there was no need to be cautious - Ari was there but he was very dead. There was a slash in his shirt, showing a perfect stab wound to the heart, Gibbs would guess. He’d seen a lot of stab wounds in his time on the MCRT and he would guess a long blade of some description but he would let Abby confirm it.

“So who would stab Ari?” McGee asked.

Gibbs shrugged as he had no idea and didn’t really care. The only good terrorist was a dead one in his book. He could tell though, that his sister, Ziva, the Mossad agent was going to be a complication. He could see the anger in her eyes and knew this would not be settled easily even as she answered. “He was undercover as a terrorist so the list is numerous.”

Gibbs didn’t disagree but whoever had killed Ari had done it whilst he was tracking the team. They had killed Haswari to stop him from killing Kate - so who?

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The who was standing in the shadows over another rooftop with his husband watching his old team. He was almost ready to leave the mainland but this revenge story had one last twist - Tony could see it in the woman’s eyes.
Adam sighed knowing just what that look meant in his husband’s eyes. “So we’re not getting out of this godforsaken place yet and going somewhere warm?”

Tony snorted. “Sure, why not I mean Ari is dead so the danger is over.”

Adam looked at his lover and knew they were not done yet. “No, we’re not, so don’t tease me.”

Tony smirked. “I promise that we can go to Hawaii on another honeymoon and you can do all the dirty things you have been saving up for the last half a century.”

Adam didn’t whine, he was an ex-horseman and Death did not whine regardless of how much he wanted to. “When?”

Tony understood loyalty because it was built into the very fibre of his being. What he also knew was treachery in other people and finally said it. “Well, once I put down David. She’s going to strike at Gibbs and I think that’s rude considering I was the one to kill her brother, not Gibbs.”

“If you say so love,” Methos said in the way only a long-suffering spouse could.

The death of Ari Haswari was as confusing as many mysteries. He’d been killed two rooftops away, the rain washing away the physical evidence. He’d been killed with what Abby had identified as a Roman Gladius Sword so probably one of the most bizarre and more expensive weapons he’d ever seen as a murder weapon. Kate, Tim and even Ziva, struggled to understand the weapon - Gibbs had known exactly what it looked like and drawn it from memory.

“How do you know this weapon?” Ziva demanded.

Gibbs had a sad smile on his face. “My protege had one on his wall. It was one of his favourite weapons in his collection.”

All demands fell from her face as she knew who Gibbs was referring to and knew it would be unwise. After all, even she couldn’t justify a suspect who was dead for the last month. Her profile suggested that Gibbs considered DiNozzo like a son, which is why Ari had chosen the time just after
his death to reignite their feud. She hadn’t been surprised after that reminder that he chose to go home earlier than normal. She made her excuses knowing that if she was to restore the honour of her family tonight would be her best opportunity.

Gibbs wanted to sand his boat, drink a few glass of whiskey and forget the memories. His thoughts swirled with many regrets, only one of which was that he wished Anthony had never opened that damn envelope. He was grateful that they had stopped Ari before he could launch a terrorist attack but he just wished he knew how Tony’s favourite sword had ended up as the murder weapon. The collection had been donated to the Pearson Foundation in London so he knew it wasn’t Tony’s exact sword but it was still an odd coincidence and Gibbs had a rule about coincidences. There’s no such thing.

A gun cocked in the basement and Gibbs turned around slowly. He wasn’t scared, just asked a calm question. “So how does this end?”

Ziva David was staring at him down the barrel of her gun. “With your death. You are the reason Ari is dead.”

Gibbs never considered himself a religious man but Tony stepping out of the shadows made him reconsider. Gibbs smirked at her because for an assassin - she wasn’t very aware. “Do they not teach you situational awareness in Mossad?”

Tony smacked her in the temple hard with the side of his sword, a very ornate Roman Gladius Sword. Gibbs watched David fall to the floor in a heap. He took the time to cuff her and remove every lock pick and knife he could find. He didn’t care about her sensibilities, the woman had tried to kill him so she forfeited that right.

“How?” Was the only question Gibbs could ask in the face of such a miracle.

Tony smiled at him softly. “Well, this is quite a long tale and I need to introduce you to someone. Adam, come here.”

Adam looked over at the cuffed woman as he stepped forward. He frowned at the woman but Gibbs was not expecting the question of, “Why does she still have her head?”

Tony snorted at his lover because he sometimes forgot about modern rules when they didn’t suit his whims. “You shouldn’t say that in front of a federal agent.”

Gibbs sighed. “Why fake your death?”
Tony shook his head. “I didn’t fake it. I did die and can I say I hate dying by the plague ... I would’ve thought it would get easier each time round but nooooooo……stabbing and burning, they suck but at least it is not drowning in your own lungs. Do you have any idea what a truly awful death that is?”

Adam rolled his eyes. “Oh, come on, you got stabbed in the Roman Senate protecting the emperor. In Salem, you were considered too beautiful not to be a witch and burnt as a result ... and you hate the plague?”

Tony stared at his lover. “It is not getting easier each time. Seriously, we have got to figure out a better way to do this in the future.”

Gibbs mind was whirring with the context given by the couple. “So you’re what, immortal?”

Tony grinned brightly. “That is exactly what I am, I was born Antonius Dorus Donatos.”

Gibbs could see where Anthony DiNozzo may have come from. You had to give the man credit, he literally just updated his name with the times. “I see. Will I see you again?”

Tony smiled and it was his true smile. “Yeah, when the time is right. Now the danger has passed for the team I will lay low and find a new life with Adam.”

Gibbs could see they were a couple. They could share whole conversations with just a glance, just like he could with Shannon. “How long have you been together?”

Tony smirked. “Since Brutus was a traitorous bastard.”

Gibbs whistled. “Long time.”

Methos smirked. “Yeah, and I still love the foolish man.”

Gibbs chuckled hearing the affection, he saw Ziva starting to stir. “Get out of here. I need to clear up this mess but Tony I mean it, if you get a chance don’t be a stranger.”
Gibbs watched Tony turn, his hand entwined with Methos’ but before he left the basement Tony turned. “You may regret that Boss.”

“Never.”

Gibbs watched the couple leave the basement snorting at the way their swords seemed to disappear into the shadows. Tony was alive and in love, he could live with that even if he did have to lose a good agent.

“What happened?”

Gibbs was a bastard. “You were attacked by a ghost like you proclaimed to be.” He could hear the laughter by the door. “We’re going to take a trip to NCIS and then you will never come anywhere near the US again because if you do, I won’t talk about it ... I will put a bullet in you. I know you read my file so you know you will never see it coming.”

Gibbs hauled Ziva up to his car on the way out he noticed a black card on his coffee table. Pearson’s Ltd, London.

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Tony and Methos were walking along the shoreline of one of the lesser known beaches. It was more private and exclusive thanks to the high price tag of admittance. “So are you ready for London?”

Tony was sated and very relaxed from their morning exercise routine. “Wait, since when did you get to pick where we live?”

Methos snorted. “I’ve gotten better at choosing.”

“Love - that is not saying much. The last time you picked - we literally got sacrificed to gods.”

Methos rolled his eyes. “That was four hundred years ago.”

Tony narrowed his eyes. “We’re immortal, we remember.”

Methos grumbled. “Unfortunately.”
“I challenge you!”

The couple turned around rolling their eyes glad it was at least a private beach. “Which one of us?”

The challenger frowned. “There can be only one, you should be fighting.”

Tony snorted. “Let me start the introductions.” Pointing to Methos “That’s Death and I’m his companion and of course, we fight ... It just ends way more satisfying than with one of us losing our heads.”

The immortal was a newbie with his weak buzz but even he had heard the legends - this was not a couple to challenge. He would have thought it was trash talk but he could feel their buzzes now and they were so strong he felt like he was drowning. He bowed his head. “I take my leave ... Enjoy your romantic walk.”

Tony smile was stunning. “Thanks. We’re on our tenth honeymoon.”

*It wouldn’t be their last honeymoon either.*
Trouble with Money (Connor Rhodes - Chicago Med)

Chapter Summary

Tony was even more reluctant to go to a hospital when his fiance was there

Chapter Notes

For any unaware of the show then the actor who plays Connor is Colin Donnel - http://www.imdb.com/name/nm4542042/?ref_=tt_cl_t5

Alternate Universe: Imagine Boxed in happened around the Chicago area and that Connor Rhodes and Tony are the same age so Rhodes will be an Attending doing more teaching.

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Tony hated this case because he was in Chicago and had been grumpy as a result. He didn’t have a personal dislike of the city, in fact, he was rather fond of the city. It was just he had the most extraordinary luck in this city - neither good nor bad. Just odd. He either ended up ill or engaged - there didn’t seem to be much middle ground.

Take for instance this stupid case, where they had chased after their perpetrators only to find the intelligence given was lax. Ziva and himself had been forced to hide in a metal container with all their ill-gotten counterfeit money. So they’d burnt it but not before taking copious amounts of high definition pictures. It wasn’t the greatest situation as his plague-scarred lungs could ill-afford to inhale that much smoke.

To top it off, he had to deal with Ziva’s arrogance, assuming that he was upset because she failed to invite him to a stupid dinner. Oh, he wasn’t unaware of the tactic but she was a rank amateur compared to all the manipulations from his father that he’d had to deal with his whole life. He just didn’t care and he hated her for so many more things that he honestly couldn’t pick. Her assumption that he was in love with her was so far off base it may as well be on Mars. He did tell his lover and they got a good laugh out of the misinformed ignorance.
To top it off Ziva alternating between hostile, judgemental and flirty in the most honestly confusing conversation Tony had ever had - she then started shooting in a metal box! The supposedly amazing Mossad agent had freaked out and acted like a rookie. He felt the burning slash on his arm and groaned more in annoyance and then the pain settled in - he had hated when the bullet lodged in bone, it was always more painful.

The door of the box finally opened to see McGee and Gibbs peering inside. “You missed all the fun.”

“Ah, you know we had a bonfire Boss, we were just missing the marshmallows.” Tony said with a levity he didn’t really feel. NCIS hadn’t felt right in a while but he’d stayed there in stubborn pride. Tony groaned when Gibbs pointed at the EMT’s. That meant that there was no way he’d avoid a hospital trip. Connor was going to kill him.

Tony was still sitting on the back step of the ambulance after getting checked over. “Boss they are sending me to the hospital, my lungs make them nervous, plus, I got shot.” Tony finished as an afterthought.

Gibbs turned back to Tim who he’d been having a conversation with. “McGee go with him.”

Ziva sneered. “He is going to the hospital for a scratch.” She said it low enough for Tony not to be able to hear it.

McGee pouted showing that he didn’t want to, which showed just how much his teammates cared about him. Chicago was looking more and more attractive to Tony in his mind. He knew it was a bad moment when he was mentally composing his resignation letter as he got comfortable in the back of the ambulance.

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The EMT gave Tony a dose of morphine meaning he started to go a little loopy. All Tony could think was he hated getting shot. It wasn’t the pain as he’d only gotten winged, it was the having to go to hospital part. He was in Chicago on a stupid case and here he was with another ruined Zegna suit. He knew he should stop wearing the Zegna but it was so comfortable. Oh, and to top it all,
Connor was no doubt on shift and would give him a piece of his mind. It was not exactly the reunion he had in mind having not seen his fiance for a month.

McGee frowned, watching Tony settle into the ambulance because he never went willingly. “You’re going to the hospital for a scratch?”

Tony’s eyes narrowed as he’d wondered what Ziva had told the others. “Is that what happened?”

McGee may be obtuse but he was wary of that tone because that was Tony at his most dangerous. His mentor was so mercurial that you often forgot the masks were masks until moments like this. “Not a scratch?”

Tony shook his head because no, this was most definitely not a scratch and his fiance was going to freak, which sucked because Connor already had enough on his plate by moving back to Chicago. “She started firing inside the box McProbie.”

McGee’s eyes widened in disbelief because that was beyond a rookie mistake. “Why?”

Tony shrugged and winced wishing he hadn’t done that. “I honestly have no idea but you need to warn Gibbs because she is acting so erratic right now.”

Tony looked at the EMT. “Where are you taking me?”

“Chicago Med.”

Tony groaned. “Oh, that is just perfect.”

McGee sighed “What?” Wondering why that could be a problem.

Tony laughed, appreciating the irony of his secret about to become a little clearer. “Well, you are about to meet my fiance, as you are coming with me.”
Tim frowned not remembering Tony ever mentioning a serious significant other. He was always flirting with the staff and witnesses. Still, looking into Tony’s eyes he could tell it was the truth. “You have a fiance? What’s her name?”

Tony sucked in a deep breath of oxygen hoping to clear some of the crap from his lungs. Damn Plague. “Connor.”

“Connor?” McGee queried, hesitantly, as that was a very gender specific name.

Tony looked defensive and wow, McGee can’t believe he hadn’t seen it. For once, he didn’t go for a smartass comment because damn, Tony was gay or at the very least bi. It was so incredible to think it was true and then he could have kicked himself because Tony was the consummate undercover professional. McGee also knew that being ‘out’ in law enforcement wasn’t always the safest option, not only for Tony but also for the team working with him.

“Maybe I’ll be lucky and he’s in surgery.” Tony said in a voice that wasn’t that hopeful. After all, as soon as his records were pulled they would contact Connor as he was Tony’s next of kin. He just probably had the shortest distance to travel - ever.

Tim’s mind was still trying to catch up with the idea of Tony with a man. “Is that likely?”

Tony rolled his eyes as he could see the junior agents brain explode behind his eyes. So much for his intelligence if something so simple freaked him out. “Hey, McBrokenBrain. Focus.”

Tim shook his head trying to clear his mind of what he was told but it was hard. He was afforded a few minutes as Tony was pulled into the hospital and into one of the medical treating bays. The staff seemed to know Tony by name reinforcing the idea that Tony might be dating one of them. If that was true, how had Tony hidden it? Why hadn’t he told Tim, Gibbs or Ziva?

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April Sexton was the nurse on duty and if there was ever proof Tony was taken, the lack of flirting with the stunning woman would be it. Still the nurse greeted Tony with a winning smile. “Hey Tony, you know you can see Dr. Rhodes without getting admitted?”

There was a teasing tone there that spoke of an acquaintance and this whole situation was throwing Tim for a loop. Tony had to laugh. “Yeah, well, you are still the only one to know officially about us before today.”

“It really is a shame but then again, I still say you two are too pretty for regular folk.”

McGee blushed at the tone from the nurse. A thought struck him and made him shudder. “Tony what are you telling Gibbs? He is your medical proxy.”
In reality, he just didn’t want to have to tell Gibbs that Ziva was possibly going off the deep-end.

Tony rolled his eyes because his probie was supposed to be an investigator. “McClueless, you now know I have a fiance and you must have realised he is a doctor. Who do you think my medical proxy is?”

The curtain rolled back and a new doctor emerged, not Connor but Tony was guessing this was Dr. Halstead given Connor’s description of him. “Hey Doc. Sorry about this but my partner got a little too excited in the field and shot me.”

Dr. Halstead grimaced. “Yeah, my brother Jay is a cop. He tells me about rookie antics all the time.”

Tony snorted because he wished that was the case. It least that was explainable even if it wasn’t forgivable. “If only she was a rook.”

The Doctor looked at him sharply. “Is this something where I need to call my brother?”

Tim looked like his eyes had been opened. Good, Tony thought grimly because goddamn it, Ziva was Mossad. She was not supposed to freak out like a rook and shoot him. She didn’t have such an excuse, so when you remove the excuse - what are you left with?

*Something all too sinister.*
It was a chilling thought and Tim had also followed the same train of thought even though he had no idea what to do about it. He wasn’t sure what he could do. “Tony, what do you suspect?”

Tony shook his head as this was not the time. He wanted his lungs checked out to make sure he hadn’t lost any more lung function after inhaling smoke from the burning money earlier.

Halstead’s eyes widened as he read the medical notes. Tony could always tell when they got to the plague part. “Is this accurate?”

Tony nodded. “Yep, hence the tests to make sure I am okay. I know the drill Doc, I need an X-Ray and MRI followed by an inhalation challenge test, an exercise stress test, a gas diffusion test, spirometry, body plethysmography and I know... If my results have fallen, I get to do it all again after inhaling a bronchodilator.”

Tim was stunned because he’d never really considered the aftermath of Tony’s brush with the plague. It was far more serious than Tony would let you believe. He seemed so indestructible at work and Tim was getting a reality check and feeling ashamed of himself.

“You never said anything.” Tim said but it sounded like a pathetic excuse even to his own ears.

Tony rolled his eyes at the response as it wasn’t worth it. He was making plans to move to Chicago as NCIS wasn’t the makeshift family he was lead to believe. He wasn’t the butt of anyone's jokes and that seemed to be happening more often than not ever since Ziva had wormed her way into the MCRT. He wouldn’t sacrifice his ethics for the woman who had indirectly been the reason for Kate’s death and he didn’t care what she’d done for Gibbs - the woman was a foreign agent with too much free access to things that no non-American had any right to know about. He just wondered what job the Commissioner had in mind for him. In all honesty, Tony was starting to get to the point where he was not too fussed what the job was - he just wanted out of NCIS.

Tony snorted. “Well, it won’t be a problem for long.”
Tim never got a chance to ask what he meant by that remark as someone new slipped into the Medbay.

“You know if you wanted to see me, honey, you didn’t have to get yourself shot.” Connor said with a smirk. “Or, you know, inhale way too much smoke.”

Tony grinned right back, the good drugs helping ease his mood somewhat. “Darling, you are always complaining that I don’t take enough interest in your work.”

Halstead was seriously confused and that was not a position he was in very often. “You two know each other?”

Tony had a sly smirk on his face and he would later blame the drugs for the quip. “Biblically.”

Connor snorted at the look of shock on Halstead’s face. “He’s right. I am going to marry the man as soon as he settles in the city.”

Tim frowned. “You mean you won’t be staying at NCIS?”

Tony ignored the question for now as his doctor was in the room. Unlike some people, Tony tried not to air his dirty laundry in public. “So Doc, what’s the verdict?”

“Well, you inhaled a lot of smoke and considering your history I would be remiss not to monitor you for any side-effects.”

Tony took one look at Connor and knew no matter how he felt about the situation, he wouldn’t try and scarper AMA as usual as he’d never hear the end of it back at the apartment. “So how quick can I get those tests done?”

It turned out that for once, he was very lucky and there were no long lasting effects.
Tim was ignoring the relationship issue for a moment because his mind couldn’t comprehend the idea of Tony in a committed relationship with anyone. He’d caught the hint. “Tony, are you leaving NCIS?”

Tony was being pulled into a hug and didn’t break it to look at Tim. “At the moment, why would I want to stay?”

*Tim knew he better tell, Gibbs quick before they lost Tony for good - but was it too late?*
Vampires were now a thing, Tony didn’t care who or what you were but if you broke the law you were gone. Of course, with the introduction of vampires into society, there had been many headaches, not least how you could arrest them and interview them.

That and the allure of the mysterious had created a new ‘groupie’ - the *fangbangers* as they were charmingly called. They were the people who went to hang around vampire bars with the sole purpose of getting bitten. Tony personally didn’t understand the appeal but as long as they were all adults and consenting then he was okay with it.

What was not okay was going AWOL and then hanging around damn Fangtasia hoping to become a vampire toy. If that was the sailor’s aim then he should never have made a promise to the US Navy.

The sad part was, Tony had attracted more attention from the vampires since entering the bar than the idiot runaway. He was polite and turned them down nicely and so far it was okay. He was just waiting for a time where he could get them on their own.

“What is a nice Federal Agent like you doing in my bar?”

Tony turned around to almost run smack into a very strong nordic chest. The owner of the strong chest was even more delightful. Tony was reminded of a Viking, then again, the guy could have been a Viking. He saw no reason to lie. “Hunting a sailor who can’t keep his promise to the US Navy.”

The vampire sighed as that was not the answer he was looking for. “Pity.”

Tony found himself asking. “Why?”

The vampire smirked and damn, that was quite a smile. “I’d hoped you were hunting *alternative* prey.”

Tony chuckled. “Sorry to disappoint.”
The vampire tilted his head like he was contemplating something fascinating. Tony didn’t know what he was trying to figure out. If Tony was honest, he didn’t care - he just needed to find Lieutenant Daniels and he would be on his way.

“I’m Eric Northman, owner of this bar and if there is anything that I can do for you, please ask.”

Tony want to shiver at the way the guy said anything - It was like a promise of the best dirty sex. He was impressed but still on a mission. “All I need is Lieutenant Daniels and I’ll be on my way.”

Eric pouted at him. “Well, that doesn’t sound like an incentive, something that would get you to leave.”

Tony laughed because yep, the vampire was flirting with him. He noticed the bartender, the fierce lady was now staring at him in fascination also. He wasn’t sure he wanted to ask why he was fascinating. “What if you’re not my type?”

The question definitely amused the vampire. “I have found in all my years I’m everyone’s type, even nuns and people who loudly proclaimed they were a Kinsey Zero.”

Tony had to admit to himself that such confident arrogance was sexy and impressive. He could imagine with his confidence and overt sexuality he’d managed to seduce many people. Tony smirked and it was a little wicked. “Well, you just implied that you have been around the block a few times. Now I don’t judge but I do like to feel special.”

The bartender slid a club soda toward him. “Oh, you are already a real special snowflake. I don’t think Eric has had anyone say no to him in two hundred years.”

Tony shrugged. “It’ll be good for his ego then, we all need to hear no every now and again. It keeps us humble.”

Pam chuckled. “I like you so much, human, I am going to bring you your soldier.”
Now Eric looked astonished. “Now, I’m impressed because my childe, Pam, doesn’t like many people, or do humans favours.”

It was something that Tony had no answer for because really, what do you say as a reply? He was also smart enough to know that no matter how good an agent he was, he didn’t have the strength to fight a vampire.

The staring match was broken by the sailor being dropped at Tony’s feet. “Here you go, precious.”

Tony grinned brightly. “Lieutenant Daniels.”

Pam sneered at the sailor. “He is not at all charming or pretty like you are sweetie.”

Tony blushed and cuffed the guy. “NCIS is much obliged for your assistance, thank you, ma’am, sir.”

Pam smiled and Tony had to smirk at the way Daniels actually shivered and then he wrinkled his nose at the smell of urine. Not cool. He would have to sit in the car with that smell back to Baton Rouge.

“So not only are you a deserter but you can’t even control your bladder? Nice.”

Pam snorted. “Some humans like the allure of us and then realise they are bone deep terrified of us.”

Tony smiled wickedly. “Only a fool wouldn’t be terrified but you are good people and only an idiot lets themselves get burned by a flame just because it looks pretty.”
Pam actually had a real smile which Tony guessed didn’t happen. You could tell it was real as it lasted a whole second. “You are smart as well as beautiful, now Eric will never get you out of his head.”

Tony smirked. “Good.” And with his last word he left the bar. He may have put a little bit of extra sway into his hips but if he did there was no one to contradict him.

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Back in Baton Rouge, Gibbs was waiting on the steps. “You found him?”

Tony rolled his eyes. “It wouldn’t be the first time, Gibbs. I’m your SFA, not a probie.”

Tony didn’t know why he had snarked back but there was something in Gibb’s tone that just pissed him off.

“I know that DiNozzo but David and McGee are turning up empty on their errand ... I figured it would be one of those days.”

“Yeah well, like I said, I have more experience than both of them combined, no matter what they believe.” Tony felt lighter for saying it. He saw the odd look from Gibbs but his boss didn’t say a damn thing. It was probably for the best as whatever he did say would no doubt come out the wrong way.

Tony just walked around his car to open the door to get the guy out of the back seat of the car. “Here’s little Lieutenant Daniels. He was trying to play with big boys in a vamp bar in Bon Temps. We can interview him but can we please make him change his damn pants.”

Gibbs smirked seeing DiNozzo’s look of disgust and he did have to sympathise with him having to put up with that smell on the drive. “Why’d he pee his pants?”
“This lovely, snarky vampire decided I was a precious thing. I’m not sure why, and I didn’t ask. She dropped him at my feet.”

Gibbs shook his head. “So your charm even works on vampires now DiNozzo?”

Tony wasn’t quite how sure how to answer that because when he did, his mind flashed back to the delectable Nordic Vampire he left behind. “Something like that, let’s not go into it.”

Gibbs quirked an eyebrow. “Okay.”

McGee was annoyed that they had been unable to chase down any information about the drug ring. There should have been something at the base but they had got nada, just paper cuts, and a snarkier attitude from being exhausted. They knew it wouldn’t be an excuse that Gibbs would accept but not even the great Jethro Gibbs could defy reality.

Ziva huffed, glad to be back at their temporary headquarters. “Do not look so glum. It is not as though Tony will have succeeded either.”

McGee did brighten at that because Gibbs seemed to always be more upset when Tony didn’t succeed. Tim never once stopped to think it was because he was held to a higher standard. “You’re right.”

As they walked through the doors, they bumped into Agent McCarron who was the local Agent in Charge. “Hey, do you know where Agent Gibbs is?”

McCarron snorted. “Yeah, he and DiNozzo are interrogating the runaway sailor to try and crack the drug ring.”

“Wait! DiNozzo found him?”
McCarron frowned not liking the junior agent's attitude. “Yeah, he did. He must have been scary doing it as the sailor peed his pants.”

McGee and Ziva shared a look and headed quickly to the observation room to try to at least listen in on the interrogation, they needed to know how Tony had got the better of them.

“**So why did you run?**”

The Lieutenant made a pitiful face and Gibbs hated him before he even spoke. “It’s not like that. I didn’t want to run drugs. The vampires were a way to escape.”

Tony sighed. “So you tried to be a drug dealer and then decided to see what it was like on the other side of the street?”

Gibbs didn’t say anything because he was listening with just as much disbelief. “Well, it’s understandable. He wasn’t a very good drug dealer. Too scared.”

Tony snorted. “But boss, he wasn’t a good blood junkie either.”

“**IT'S YOUR FAULT!**” Daniels spat at Tony.

Tony rolled his eyes because wow, way to absolve yourself of any guilt. “And just how is it my fault? I was only there to track your stupid ass down.”

“You had the King’s attention from the moment you walked in.” Daniels was still glowering at him.

“You mean, Eric?”
Daniels scoffed. “You had a thousand-year-old vampire, a genuine Viking fawning over you and you rejected him.”

Tony did snort. “Despite what many think. I don’t make serious decisions based on sex. I was doing a job and that was all that mattered.”

“You even had Pam, the meanest Vampire do your biding.” Daniels whined at him.

Tony smirked. “She liked that I told her master no. You, she wasn’t too keen on so she was more than too happy to drop you at my feet. You are going to tell me everything you know ... Or, I am going to invite her down here to ask questions on my behalf.”

Gibbs really needed to meet this vampire because just her name was enough to break the whole damn drug ring wide apart. He didn’t even know she liked being a redhead when the mood suited her.

Gibbs and DiNozzo left the interrogation room late into the day, so much so that night had fallen. Tim and Ziva were waiting for them. “So you now have vampire groupies?”

Tony smirked. “Careful Ziva, you sound jealous.”

She sneered. “No Vampire can compete with my talents.”

Tony shrugged because he was in no mood to pander to her ego and she wouldn’t like his answer if he told her the truth.

Tim was wide-eyed. “You had a female vampire do your bidding?”
Tony rolled his eyes. “McDuffus, Vampires are people too, just way more anaemic. And no, Pam did what she wanted. I was just fortunate enough to have amused her into doing what I needed.”

Tim was still broken on the idea that Tony had met two vampires who seemed to like him, for more than just his blood. Tony seeing the broken glaze rolled his eyes. “Boss, can I go back to the hotel because the bigotry is starting to really offend me.”

Gibbs shrugged. “You broke the case so sure thing.”

Tony got up to leave and he could hear McGee and David follow him. He didn’t doubt that they had more they wanted to say. It would be tiresome but he could endure. As he got out into as fresh air as this city could manage, a man literally landed right by his feet.

“Hello again, Eric. Although, I am reliably informed I should have called you my King.” Tony said, realising that yep, he was flirting with the male vampire.

“I won’t object to that title but I was here to ask you to dinner.”

Tony smiled. “Sure thing, providing you drink from a bottle on the first date.”

Eric snorted. “Pity as I have no doubt your blood is divine.”

Tony fluttered his eyelashes. “I bet you say that you all the girls.”

Eric shook his head. “I have not had to work this hard for a date in two centuries.”

Tony turned back to see Tim and Ziva staring at him in shock. It was not an attractive look. “Don’t wait up, I don’t know when I’ll be back.”

Tony then had the best exit possible as he was flown away by the nordic blonde vampire. Tim looked to his teammate. “He will be back, right?”

Ziva shrugged as she had no idea. “As what? Is the more relevant question.”
The soon-to-be hotter spouse (Nathan Stark)

Jack Carter hated the world right now. He was stuck in a crazy egghead town and his daughter was far away in LA. There had been a bright side in all of this - the cute DOD agent was gorgeous, smart and had been flirting with him.

Jack thought he might have had a chance to until he’d been introduced to the King of the Eggheads. The tensions and arguments between Dr’s Blake and Stark were reminiscent of the ones he had with Abby, his ex-wife.

Jack sighed and pinched his nose already foreseeing the potential headache this was going to develop into. “Are you married, divorced or just separated?”

He got twin glares but Jack didn’t care. This was important as it would affect relationships between the most influential people in town. He needed to know to figure out how they might react in a crisis.

Blake gave in. “Separated because someone won’t sign the papers.”

Nathan smirked. “Yes, well that was two years ago and the wounds were too fresh. Here are your papers.”

Allison took them and Jack noticed instead of being grateful, she seemed suspicious. “Why?”

Nathan’s grin actually grew and that was because he could visibly see he’d gotten under her skin. Still, Nathan didn’t have to share anything now - that was the point. “You know, signing those papers means I don’t have to tell you.”

Allison huffed. “So we divorced because you didn’t want to be head of GD and now two years later, you’re here and now you’ve signed the papers.”

Stark shrugged. “My circumstances changed. Don’t worry, I will behave when you inevitably go after Mayberry.”

Jack flushed and watched the way Allison’s eyes narrowed. This was going to turn into a shouting
match and he didn’t have time for that. “Dr. Blake, why don’t we go and talk to Dr. Taggert about this ghost?”

Stark shook his head. “That sounds like a marvellous plan, Mayberry.”

Jack rolled his eyes and all but dragged Allison away. Stark was relieved and also saddened that anyone with a Ph.D. would ever believe in ghosts.

Nathan waited until he was alone to make a phone-call to his lover. They had discussed it and agreed that it was too big an opportunity to walk away from. Nathan still couldn’t believe that Tony had agreed to move with him. He had believed they would stay in Washington but Tony’s work was getting to the point where he was happy to leave to go to Eureka. The DOD were ecstatic to have pinched his lover and Stark would be glad that his partner could finally use his doctorate at least in part. It just sucked that he was needed in GD early and Tony was stuck in Washington having to deal with his team being childish because their supposed leader had ditched them.

“Why did I ever let you talk me into this?” Nathan said by way of a greeting. He loved Tony and already missed him, which was crazy because Stark had always assumed there would be nothing more important to him than science. It was one of the reasons his relationship with Allison had failed.

Tony’s teasing retort was. “Are you going soft on me?”

Nathan smirked because it was one the things he adored most about Tony. “Don’t be mean, Caro.”

Tony snorted. “I like you sexy and mean, don’t let anyone tell you any different. I would be with you in a heartbeat but I’m here stuck serving as leader of the MCRT for six months, or until Gibbs pulls his head out of his ass.”

It was the only deal they could get between NCIS and DOD because Shepard had argued that the MCRT was too critical to go leaderless and it wouldn’t survive the loss of two leaders in quick succession. The fact that the team had the highest solve in all of the alphabet agencies had supported her argument. Tony had little choice but to agree and promised Nathan that as soon as he could he would be in Eureka and they would marry.

Nathan grinned. “And how are the puppies?”
That was the name the couple had come up for Ziva, Tim, and Abby. “In need of a rolled newspaper across the ass or a citation. I haven’t yet decided which would be best. If they think I am going to be a doormat they are going to be mistaken. I am not Gibbs but I won’t tolerate them disrespecting the victims we are meant to find justice for.”

Stark knew that sometimes Tony would hide behind a mask but never with him. He’d done it in the past and now it was biting him on his backside and whilst part of Nathan wanted to build him a portal to drop them in a hell dimension - this was Tony’s team and he wouldn’t interfere. “Tony, be yourself and let them see who you are Dr. DiNozzo.”

Tony chuckled. “Oh, that is part of the problem, if you said that they never would believe you.”

Nathan rolled his eyes. “Then they are not as good investigators as they believe.”

Tony would pay for someone to say that their faces. “I know. I love you, Nathan, don’t forget that in your crazy town.”

Nathan chuckled. “You are about to become oversight for the town.”

Tony sighed wistfully. ”Yeah, the head of GD is a crazy sex god who asked me after blowing my brains out.”

“Sounds like he is a master planner,” Nathan responded.

He got a chuckle and he knew he’d managed to at least relieve some of Tony’s stress.

Tony responded. “Yes, he is and I love him dearly.”

Nathan grinned. “And I love you too, now go and catch bad guys.”

Nathan shut his phone off at the eep to be faced with his new assistant. “Can I help you, Fargo?”
The assistant shook his head. He was still trying to process all the things he’d heard. It sounded like there was someone who was in a relationship with Dr. Stark - and how were they not scared?

“Er, here are the files you asked for, Sir.” Fargo managed to say without too much of a stutter. He hated it but this was the man who had made three-star generals cry. He was so scary that he didn’t have to shout, he just stood there in his tailored suit making you feel small with just a look.

“Thank you, Fargo, that will be all.”

Nathan sat back in his chair, catching himself up on the files. He wanted to be up to date so that as soon as Tony did get to town, he wouldn’t be stuck at the office. He wasn’t the type to put photos on his desk but his phone’s background once you unlocked the screen showed shining green eyes looking at him.

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Tony walked into smug faces from Ziva and Tim - he looked stoney but inside he was dancing a jig. Tony just wished he could record this so he could watch it with Nathan later. Very Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo was going to leave NCIS with a bang, not a whimper.

“Why has my stuff been moved?” Tony asked.

McGee answered. “You are not the big boss anymore so I don’t have to listen to you.”

Tony snorted. “Even if Gibbs is back McStupid, I’m still SFA and this is if I choose to stay.”

Ziva snorted. “Why would you go anywhere else, you are Gibbs’ loyal St Bernard?”

Tony was saved from answering by Gibbs coming down the steps from the Director’s office and Director Shepard was with him. This was her fulfilling her end of the bargain for all the crap he’d been forced to endure.
“DiNozzo, you should gas the truck.”

Tony stood up. “No, I think I will pass as that is a probie job. Plus, I don’t work for you, Gibbs.”

Gibbs stared at him with a sneer, wow, so much for his memory being back. Tony didn’t care as this was NCIS’s problem. If Gibbs was back, then he would be the leader of the MCRT meaning Tony could finally start officially working for the DOD. “What - do you think you are too good to work for me?”

Tony smiled brightly. “Maybe, or maybe you should let Director Shepard talk as she looks like she wants to say something.”

Shepard nodded her head in gratitude towards Tony. “Thank you, Agent DiNozzo for your years of dedicated service. I stand by the promise I made with the DOD. You are now free to go and I wish you every success in your future career.”

“Thank you Madam Director, and I will make sure you get an invite to the wedding.” Tony looked at the box of his belongings and wanted to laugh. Gibbs in his attempt to reestablish his authority had actually saved him a task. “Thanks, Gibbs you saved me a job.”

“That’s it?” Gibbs growled. “And what wedding?”

He was calm and it was almost hysterical at the way the whole bullpen was silent and watching. Tony was calm, he handed Director Shepard his badge and gun. “Thank you once again, Director. Oh, and Nathan loved the wine.”

She smiled. “Thank you, Tony and I would leave now before the jackals demand things they have no right to know.”

Team Gibbs flushed as that wasn’t exactly a subtle dig. “We’re his friends.”
Jenny snorted. “If you’re his friends then he really doesn’t need enemies but I look forward to seeing Agent Gibbs whipping you back into shape and remember Gibbs, Dr. Agent DiNozzo is no longer a part of this agency so you can’t complain to him.”

McGee paled. “You have a Doctorate? In what? From where? Why didn’t you say anything?”

Tony smiled and it was incandescent. “I do, Behavioral Psychology, and from Harvard, and I did say things to my friends as they were there when I accepted my diploma. Hey, you should be pleased - your attitudes and the effect they had on team dynamics made a fascinating case study for my dissertation.”

Tony looked around the room and took the time to ignore Gibbs and the team. He shook hands with those who’d helped him in the last few months - he’d valued their actions more than you know. He’d already taken Ducky and the Gremlin out to dinner earlier that week to explain what was going on so he would be able to leave now before the shock wore off and the team started to demand things that they have no right to know.

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Tony hadn’t worried too much about the apartment as he owned it outright. He would have it maintained by a cleaning service and then Nathan and he had somewhere to stay when they were required to head back to Washington for work purposes and it would be less sterile than a hotel.

He knew he’d made it to Eureka when he saw the floating car. He drove down the main street wondering if he would get a chance to surprise Nathan and headed for the cafe remembering Nate telling him that the nerve centre for all gossip ran through the cafe and the chef, Vince.

He stepped into the cafe and all the occupants stopped and stared at him. “Hey now, I know I look good but does anyone think they can direct me to Dr. Stark.”

The small guy turned around with glasses and Tony knew who this was, it was Nathan’s assistant. “He is going to be here soon.”
Tony took his sunglasses off. “Well, I guess I will wait here then.”

Vince slid a hazelnut latte over to him. “Okay, so why would you voluntarily be seeking out Dr. Stark.”

“Who is voluntarily seeking me out?” A calm voice asked from behind Tony. Vince was treated with a movie star worthy smile and the poor chef was fanning himself.

“Me.” Was all the newbie said but as he said it, he turned around got off his stool and walked toward the scary Head of GD.

Tony was looking directly at his fiance, knowing just what he wanted to do. There was also a piece of him that wanted it to get back to the ex-wife that she needed to keep her mitts of Nathan. “Well, I was in the neighbourhood and I thought I would stop by to do this.”

*This* was a thorough kiss and just barely respectable grope in public. They broke the kiss when oxygen became an issue. “I’m here to stay Dr. Stark.”

“Well, in that case, let me show you home, Dr. DiNozzo.”

Vince watched the pair leave hand in hand. “Who is that Italian Stallion?”

“Dr. Stark’s fiance,” Fargo replied.

Vince pouted. “Damn, the good ones are always hot, married or gay.”

Fargo grinned. “Well, then I think he is about to be all three and I am not going to fight Dr. Stark for him.”
Truer words and the fit Alison pitched when she realised his new spouse was beneath Nathan - was too funny not to be recorded. He would thank S.A.R.A.H for sending him the footage.
Once a Field Agent ... (Will Brandt)

Tony had never cared for what people thought of him. He wasn’t in the closet, nor was he the type to broadcast his conquests. It was stupid considering his day job. When Tony cared about someone the last thing he ever wanted was to put them at risk. If people took one look at him and decided certain things about him - then he wasn’t going to correct them.

Kate, his new teammate was a good person. What she needed to do was stop thinking she knew everything about someone from first glance. Gibbs was pandering to it but Tony wouldn’t - it was too naive and stupid during investigative work.

“So who was she? The reason you’re late?” Kate asked with a sneer.

Wow, that level of vitriol in her voice this early meant she was in a bad mood. Tony was guessing his buddy, Steve, had more than likely broken up with her again. Tony wasn’t having it, not today with Will going on a mission to Russia. “Or, since my team leader hasn’t reprimanded me, there was another reason and it is not any of the junior agent's business.”

Kate flushed not liking the reminder that since changing agencies she was now a junior agent. Tony wouldn’t let her attitude affect cases which would be where it was heading. He’d been friendly with one of his frat buddy’s wives and the next thing he knew he was branded forever a player. He was genuinely perplexed because he was a one man type of guy and Will suited him just fine.

Gibbs checked in with his SFA. “Are you okay?”

Tony shrugged trying not to feel helpless because this was the job. He knew Will’s job was dangerous despite being in theory the Chief Analyst. Tony’s clearance meant he knew of the IMF and what his fiance did but not mission details. Well, apart from the mission where they’d met - that
was a good time in Budapest. “Who knows? They’re off to Russia, you know everything over there is dicey.”

Gibbs snorted. “Understatement, but trust him.” Tony had a real smile for a second. “Always.”

Kate didn’t like the conversation being deliberately vague to go over her head. It didn’t matter, as there was nothing she could do about it. She had to have some patience as she could get it out of Tony eventually.

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The screen in the bullpen always showed the news channel - it was always useful to know current affairs. Tony nearly fell back on his chair but somehow managed to say standing when he saw it. William would be okay, he had to be. Tony was struggling to breathe and he was as fit as a fiddle. He hated having to wait - he was sure someone was speaking to him but he couldn’t think for a second.

“Tony?”

Tony’s phone rang once, followed by a text. It was the only thing keeping him upright. There was nothing on the message nor from the phone number. There wouldn’t be because it was a pre-arranged signal for both of them if their mission or cover went south. Tony would have to do the easiest and at the same time, most difficult thing possible - Wait.

Kate saw the look at the text. “Tony, we need to finish the case, you can flirt with your latest girl later.” Tony snorted unwilling to hold back. “Well, the girl’s name is William and he is my fiance so for the love of all that is holy- Shut up for five.” “Tony!” Tony rolled his eyes at Gibbs because that was some double standard. He was reprimanded for setting her straight and her inappropriate comment was ignored. Typical. He wasn’t willing to let this go. “What do you want from me,
Gibbs? He messaged to say he had a meeting at the Kremlin.” He had to sell the anguish and make people believe he was dead. No one would chase the dead it was the only help Tony could give for now.

Gibbs did pause upon hearing that, now understanding why Tony was pissed. He knew operators like Brandt and no matter what the boy tried to peddle, he was more than just an analyst. The look, the movements, the natural suspicion had all the markings of a field agent. Oh, and the perpetual look of guilt also was familiar too for an agent on a mission gone south. Gibbs didn’t say anything because the look disappeared around Tony and that said more than therapy ever could.

Kate sat back on her chair stunned. She wanted to deny it, so sure of her opinion of Tony but you couldn’t fake that type of emotion. Huh, she wondered just who could steal the heart of Anthony DiNozzo? And the idea that the person was a man seemed just too incredible.

She shook off her swirling thoughts because she couldn’t in all good conscience keep on teasing Tony. He was clearly rattled and she tried to be a good human being. “What do you need, Tony?” Tony sighed. “To see Will. I know that won’t happen so I need a problem to distract me.”

Kate nodded and went back to her report.

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Kate kept staring at Tony like he was a broken puzzle she needed to fix - so much so, that even Timmy, the probie, picked up on the action.
“Why do you keep staring at DiNozzo?” Tim asked, vaguely confused.

Kate looked like she was going to say something and then shut up. She did this a few times and clearly she wanted to say something. “Is it a shocking secret?”

Kate would have in a normal situation chuckled because yes it was. Still, she was decent and wouldn’t compound Tony’s misery by making him the subject of gossip. She wasn’t naive and knew that there was more than one reason police and federal agents were in the closet. Times were changing but sadly some sectors of society were taking just a little too long.

Luckily the case wrapped up, all the while Tony kept checking his phone. The last message was what he needed because he grinned like it was Christmas. “Boss, I need a week.” Kate and Tim looked at each other expecting an explosion but they didn’t get one. Gibbs just said, “Go, Morrow is aware.” The team saw Tony’s true smile, which was odd. Was it bad of them that they didn’t know they’d never seen a true smile from the SFA - what did that say about them?

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Dubai was a hot and sandy place and the Burj hotel was a monument to the rich. Tony dressed for the part, he was basically playing himself, minus the Federal Agent part. His suit was pressed and Armani like half of the hotel occupants. Tony was a man on a mission and he said a quick prayer of thanks to his dear departed Uncle Clive for the money he had left him. It made this mission far easier than it might have been.

Tony was sitting at the bar in the hotel waiting for a glimpse of Will or his target. He was nursing a whiskey that was nothing more than ginger ale as an easy cover. It was an hour later when he saw
William, with three others, walk through the door. Tony found himself impressed because he knew the team was under ghost protocol. If so, the money on display suggested excellent forethought on the team leader's part.

Tony stayed back but followed at a slower pace when he noticed Sabine Moreau enter the building. She was a very pretty woman but she was also on every Agency watchlist known to man. If the IMF were in the hotel, disavowed or not - Tony would put money on the woman being involved.

Tony watched her elevator stopped and made a mental note of the floor. He wasn’t an amateur, he wouldn’t follow her in her own lift. He kept his distance and then slipped into another room that was kept ajar by the cleaning woman. Tony listened carefully, wanting to help the team if needed.

The bangs and crashes made Tony want to burst into the room but he wouldn’t be a distraction that could kill his fiance. He just hoped that Will stopped holding back finally. “Moreau is on the move!” A voice shouted.

Tony pulled a simple move but it was one that required you to time it to perfection. He stepped out into the hallway just as she dashed past him and put his foot out. “Oops.”

Ethan frowned seeing Tony, wondering who the hell he was but it didn’t matter. He needed to go after Wistrom as the man had nuclear launch codes and he had no right to them.

Tony had no problem pushing the woman back into the room she had just tried to flee. As he did, he saw Will finish putting one of his attackers on the ground. Good.
“Hey honey. Your guest looked to be leaving in a hurry.”

Will smirked looking like all his Christmas’ had come at once. “Ms. Moreau we have a few more questions to ask you and this time, you have no goons. I think... I like these odds.” Brandt touched his radio. “Benji, Jane, go and help Ethan.” “What about Moreau?” Jane demanded to know. Will looked at Tony who still had a hand on Moreau’s shoulder. “I got this. Go get the launch codes back.”

His attention was back in the room, watching as Moreau hissed at his lover. “Who are you?” Tony smirked. “Sorry sweetheart. You are not my type, he is though.”

Will snickered seeing the look on her face. Sabine Moreau was the type to use her looks as merely one more tool in her arsenal. The idea that someone might not be attracted to her was a mighty shock.

“So why is she here?” Tony asked.

Will didn’t see the point in hiding the facts from Tony because he had the skills to be able to help. He figured with all the crap they were all dealing with they needed any help they could get. “Ms. Moreau managed to kill one of our agents last week and appropriate Russian nuclear launch codes .” Tony sighed. “And who has she sold them to?”

“A henchman working for a madman who wants to bring about a nuclear war to help the Earth.” Will managed to say it all without any inflection in his voice.
“Perfect. And what makes you think diamonds is a good exchange for nuclear annihilation?” Will saw the look on Moreau’s face and there was the first crack in her cool exterior he’d seen. Tony didn’t stop there. “Yeah, now you get it. So how did Wistrom contact you and is there something you can offer us to fix this clusterfuck.” Just as he finished his little menacing piece Benji and Jane, the last two members of Will’s team, raced through the door. The tech specialist explained, a little breathless from all the running. “Ethan wanted to make sure you were okay. And who is the suit?” “His fiance,” Tony responded not offering a name.

Jane looked between them and she could see the natural chemistry and didn’t doubt what he said. “Okay, and how did you know to be here?” She asked with all the natural suspicion of a spy.

Tony just snorted because he’d worked with Gibbs for too long to be intimidated. “Sweetheart, I knew Will before he was an analyst and our jobs safety records suck. We have preplanned signals for everything so as not to give the other a heart attack.” Benji crowed. “Just like you will give Ethan a heart-attack.” Jane heard the other part of what Tony said. “Before he was an analyst.” Will shrugged it off. “I was a field asset and a good one. There was an op that went bad.”

Benji looked at his teammate. “Oh, like that explains everything.”

Tony glared. “If you can’t offer anything helpful be quiet. Loose lips and all that.”

It was that statement that Ethan walked in grunting. “Wistrom is in the wind and we need to have words, Brandt.” The team freaked out but Tony stood up. “Do not get pissy with Will because you lost your mark. Oh, and Sabine here would like to explain how you can get into contact with Mr. Wistrom.” The icy blonde was glaring at Tony but did exactly as promised. Ethan was angry at the new player that he didn’t know about. It was not his greatest week but even he wasn’t naive - the cocky guy had helped.

“We owe you.” Tony didn’t say anything in return. “Just bring my fiance back to me in one piece.”
“For god sake, Tony!”

Ethan got the feeling that this Tony blamed him for somehow breaking Brandt in the first place. He couldn’t see how it was his fault that an agent with those skills was no longer in the field full-time. Ethan would be investigating why as soon as Wistrom and the nuclear device was dealt with.

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Will returned to Washington and their home, a little battered but lighter somehow. Tony wanted to ask but he didn’t. He’d done what was needed in Dubai and then headed back to Washington before he was a distraction for Will in the field.

“Are you good?” Tony asked, reeling Will to their bed for some much-needed rest.

“Yeah, I am.” Was the reply and there was no hint of doubt in Will’s voice.

Once Will was in bed with him Tony asked. “What is it?” “Ethan has arranged a meet for the team.” Tony knew what the indecision was over but in the end - only Will could decide. “Look you went through hell in Croatia. Go, listen to the pitch and then you are allowed to tell him to get lost. I’ll come with if you want.”

It was that conversation that found Tony hanging back at the bar of the cafe as Ethan met the team. He wasn’t trying to intrude in IMF business - there were some things safer not to know.
“Get over here, DiNozzo.” Tony sauntered over at the command as it was exactly what he wanted. “Welcome back, Hunt. Burnt covers can be a bitch, I would know.”

Ethan snorted because that was understating the problem. He didn’t want to take up any more of Will’s time, Brandt’s life had been messed with too much by him already. “You would know. He is a good man, DiNozzo, don’t lose him.”

Tony smirked. “I never doubted it, you just need to watch his six in the field.”

Tony didn’t say anything else because it would be useless. He was going home with Will and the rest of the world could hang this weekend. He was spending time with his fiance.
Whenever Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo spoke about his special Dee all the woman would sigh and wonder about just who could capture the heart of such a man.

To everyone at work, Anthony DiNozzo was assumed to a be a straight man - with the world at his feet. Kate disliked the way Tony would never give any real details about his significant other to the point where Kate wondered if she was even real. Tony was sure that Gibbs knew the truth about Dee but never said anything to the team.

It was proved as such when one night Gibbs decided to drop by to pick him up on the way to a crime scene. Dean answered the door in his boxers and a white open shirt as he was about to pull it off. Dean knew exactly who Gibbs was, he grunted a greeting. “Damn. Tony, Fed at the door.”

There was a chuckle from within the apartment. “You can let him in babe. Remember, I am a Fed as well.”

Dean snorted. “Yeah, but you are pretty and I love you. He is just an ass to my department.”

“You’re a detective?” Gibbs asked.

“Yep, Detective Winchester at your service,” Dean smirked. “You are alright and I don’t hate you for dragging us to Washington.”

Gibbs shrugged, he’d always believed you don’t waste good. He’d made the offer and it was up to Tony to take it. “How long you been a cop?”

“Since Tony suggested I should take my protective nature and channel it into a career.”

Gibbs was impressed it was an answer and an evasion all at the same time. “Well, we’ve gotta get
going. Work calls.”

“It always does.”

Tony bustled out of the bedroom, considerably more clothed than he had been moments before. He could hate Gibbs but there was a victim out there that needed help.

“So Dee huh?” As they drove away at Gibbs’ usual speed.

Tony shrugged, he wasn’t ashamed of his relationship. He loved Dean and with all that Dean had hunted down in his life - humans didn’t scare him. Dean didn’t understand them as easily as he did the supernatural monsters but he would hunt the human scumbags down as well. “We met, we talked, we decided to fall in love somewhere down the line.”

Tony could hardly explain that there had been a demon, a possession and all round bad drinking dive to the story. This was what worked.

“I ain’t judging but the team will find out.”

Tony snorted. “No, Kate took one look at me and decided I was a ladies man and a cad towards Dean. Don’t worry, Dean finds it hysterical. Tim assumes that my looks get me anything I want, not realising that Dean is better looking and I have more snap judgements made about me because of my looks than he does for his geeky ways.”

Gibbs said nothing because his second was right - if they didn’t figure it out, they didn’t deserve to know. Tony was careful to share details but never lie and even the less observant amongst people would recognise his continual hiding of the gender. Gibbs being Gibbs left it with a, “I can’t believe you found someone prettier than you.”

Tony just smirked because he was imagining what Dean would do if Gibbs ever said it to his face.

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Tony had got back and it was late. He was so grateful that he was sent home and literally crawled into bed, snuggling close to Dean. “So glad I’m home.”

“Sleep now, sex in the morning.” Dean groused grumpily and Tony managed a fond grin even through his exhaustion.

“Yes sir.”

Nothing else was said and silence in their apartment reigned supreme and both men went back to a far more contented slumber. The two men considering their past though, with mob undercover cases and the supernatural cases - were light sleepers. As soon as they heard the first floorboard creak, a deliberate maneuver on their parts so they had an not-too-obvious early warning system in place.

Dean was far less sleepy so he reacted first and Tony reached for his gun, hanging back supporting his lover.

The intruder was taken down by a sucker punch and rolled with the punch. Tony growled at seeing the knock-down fight that involved. The thing was the moves were too well practiced and Dean seemed to be able to predict the person’s moves - meaning he knew the intruder. Tony was done playing, he was sleepy and would have to be at work in three hours. He cocked the gun loudly and spoke clearly. “Look, I am tired and will happily shoot you for a few hours in bed.”

The distraction was all Dean needed to put the attacker under him. “Sammy.”

Tony knew the name, it was the little brother. “Stanford Law, Sammy?”

Dean got up chucking. “Yeah, that’s the one.” Although, there was now a frown on his face, one that was pure brotherly suspicion. “What are you doing breaking into the house of a Federal Agent and a Detective Sammy? Surely they covered that in pre-law 101.” He said so exasperated that a little bit of Kansas slipped back into his voice.

Sam threw his hands up in the air in annoyance. “Well, no one could find you.”
“There was a reason for that, I was done being used!” Dean responded flatly. And he meant every word of what he had said. His Dad had dragged both of his sons on his supernatural revenge tour aiming to kill the thing that had got their mom so many years ago. His Dad expected him to be a good son, a good marine even at thirteen and practically a good mother to Sam because he had no idea how to raise either son while so wrapped up in his grief.

Sam rolled his eyes. “Look, I didn’t come here to fight you, Dean, this is important.”

“Anything you want to say, you can say in front of Tony, he knows.” Dean said, as a response and put the right inflection on knows to make his point.

Sam was surprised that but his thoughts that Dean had turned his back on hunting were also wrong. He could tell that as soon as he had seen the Devil’s trap under the welcome mat, and the hex bags in the side cabinet in the entranceway of the apartment. “Fine. Uncle Bobby contacted me, Dad went on a hunting trip a week ago and failed to make contact. So here I am.”

“You came an awful long way to tell me that.” Dean wasn’t kidding - Stanford to Washington wasn’t a small trip.

Sam shrugged. “Well, I figure I got a missing person and a brother who tracks down missing people for a living.”

Dean smirked because his brother always was a sassy cupcake. “Babe, go and sleep. Seems I have family troubles to deal with.”

Tony rolled his eyes and secured his gun. “You’re a fool if you think I will let you do this alone.”

Dean smiled and it reached his eyes. “I know but I had to offer ... you only got in from god knows where a few hours ago.”

Tony shrugged. “You’re worth more than sleep De’ we’ve had this conversation.” He looked down and realised he wasn’t exactly wearing a lot. “I’ll join you when I have a few more clothes on.”
Sam watched his brother’s lover head back into their bedroom. “Brother, I’m pleased for ya but how did we both end up with someone so out of our league?”

Dean chuckled, remembering just how they met. “Well, mine involved a bar, a career pep-talk, a succubus and a helluva better end to the evening.”

Sam was worried about his Dad, the man may be an asshole but he was their father. Although, he was glad that Dean had broken free from their drama and their arguments. Neither man had noticed just how much their arguments had chipped away at Dean until it had been too late and he’d left in the middle of the night saying he’d contact them when he was good and ready.

All three of them sat around the table and Dean got the conversation started. “So just what did Bobby say about Dad?”

Sam handed over the folder he’d been sent by Bobby. “This is Dad’s research.”

Tony opened up and looked at it with a season investigators eye. “All men, same stretch of five-mile road. Doesn’t mean a monster Sam, it could be a human.”

Sam didn’t disagree, in fact, his early research suggested more of a human serial killer than a monster his Dad should be interested in stopping too. It wasn’t that he didn’t believe that human monsters shouldn’t be stopped - it was why he wanted to become a prosecuting lawyer. It was the reason why Dean had no doubt gone into the police force. “Oh, I agree but then Bobby got a message from Dad.”

Sam pressed the recording, the message was scratchy and not too clear. Tony itched to give it to Abby to clear it up.

Dean frowned. “There is EVP on that.”

Sam smirked at him. “So you haven’t forgotten? Yeah, there was and Bobby already cleared it up.”

All three heard the new message and this was not a man, it was a woman and it was spooky hearing the voice say. “I can never go home.”
Dean groaned and wanted to slam his head on the table. “He got himself tangled with a woman in white, alone?”

Tony could see where this was going. “Okay, so once Dean and I put in for leave, where are we heading?”

“Jericho, California.”

*Oh, that was perfect, nothing could wrong in a place with a name like Jericho. Oh well, Tony couldn’t wait to find his father-in-law. He’d been wanting to punch John Winchester in the face for a long time.*
Ziva, Tim, and Abby were gossiping about their favourite source - Tony. There was something going on with Very Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo and he wasn’t telling anyone.

“He is not seeing someone.” Tim was so sure.

Abby pouted. “Why not? I mean he is certainly hot enough.”

Ziva rolled her eyes. “Yes Abby he is, but looks aren’t everything. He dates indiscriminately.”

Abby smirked. “Oh yeah. So tell me ... when was the last time you heard him mention a date?”

There was a silent awkward pause as they thought about what the Forensic scientist had asked them. The answer was not in a damn long time, in fact, not since he’d come back from his time afloat.

“He is seeing someone!” Tim and Ziva said at the same time in shock. It didn’t reflect well on their investigative ability that they hadn’t noticed.

Ziva frowned. “Why wouldn’t he say something?” She had assumed that their friendship had cooled since she was dating Michael and Tony was jealous.

Abby shrugged looking sad. “I don’t know but I am going to find out.”

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Tony was enjoying his lunch break down in autopsy - not where one might think to partake in food but it worked for Tony and Jimmy. “So when is deployment over?”

Tony shrugged. “He has leave in three months but the fun times are when he can surprise me at the apartment.”

Jimmy had met Cameron one evening and found he liked the Colonel immensely - mainly because of how well he treated his friend. “How does he manage to do that?”

Tony shrugged. “He is a Colonel in the Air-Force and I am smart enough not to ask. It helps that we both understand things like security clearance.”

Jimmy smirked. “Well, I suppose there is that.”

Tony bit his lip. “He did message me the other day. It seems he is getting a weekend off and I really want to see him undisturbed.”

Jimmy could translate that well enough, Tony wanted to see Cameron but not have NCIS interfere. “So stay at a swanky hotel and enjoy your weekend. It is not like you have to hide if you don’t want to.”

Tony let out a shaky breath because he did know this. Still, it was significantly harder to let himself believe it. “I know and it helps to know that we’re both armed and can handle ourselves.”

Jimmy giggled. “Sorry I was just imagining the shock of a homophobe picking a fight with you.”

Tony snorted. “I think Cam’ and I would rock, paper, scissor it.”

Jimmy smiled softly because he was so glad that his friend had someone like he had Breena. “You know what you have to do.”

“What - ask Vance for the time off as my team is not on call?” Tony said, knowing that was exactly what he had to do.
Jimmy nodded, “Yes if you want the time off without the team knowing why.”

“Am I wrong not telling them?” Tony asked feeling a little guilty.

“Nope because good friends would have asked you what is going on in your life. Has that happened?”

Tony shook his head because there were times he was wondering why Gibbs had wanted him back in Washington. “No, and I hear ya autopsy gremlin. Vance will grant the time off as it will give him a one-up on Gibbs.”

“Exactly.”

Tony knocked the door. “Director do you have a minute?”

Vance’s head shot up at the question, the politeness of the request and who it was - made him suspicious. “What can I do for you Agent DiNozzo?”

The man was far calmer than his usual persona. “Well sir, I would like two days leave if possible this weekend.”

“You are not on-call.” Vance reminded him wondering why if that was the case the SFA would want to waste his holiday time.

Tony nodded acknowledging this point. “That is true sir but we are the MCRT and I know if there is a hot case it doesn’t matter whether we are on rotation or not.”

“Why?”
Tony had a small smile. “My partner has leave from the Air-Force and as it could be six months before I see him again, I am really hoping I can guarantee my time off.”

“I wasn’t aware you were in a relationship DiNozzo.”

Tony shrugged playing it off as not a big deal. “I work long and hard to let people see what I want them to sir. It is easier to work if you’re underestimated.”

Tony could see the dawning realisation in Vance’s eyes - it annoyed him that he’d had to spell it out to his boss. Sometimes though, better to speak up than be frustrated through misplaced pride - Okay, so Tony had listened to Cam’s advice.

Vance studied him for a moment then responded. “I don’t need a clown, I want to see a seasoned professional DiNozzo, so lose the act in the office.”

DiNozzo smirked. “And if the team can’t handle the switch?”

Vance stared at him stonily. “Is that likely to be a problem?”

“The way Gibbs is running the team, yes.” Tony said not bothering to hide his assessment. He didn’t really care one way or another. He was looking at his options and those offers from the other agencies were looking all the more attractive.

“I see.” Vance was debating something internally, that much was obvious. “Well, you let me worry about the team. Your career has stalled and that won’t be allowed to continue.”

Tony frowned because he’d been expecting a hard time for having a male lover, not a pep-talk. “Sir?”

Vance smirked. “You see, I can admit to getting it wrong. When you were sent afloat, SecNav
ordered I read your full file. I was waiting for a chance to talk to you about dropping the masks.”

Tony smiled and this time it was genuine. “You know what? It will be my pleasure.”

This day was turning out to be full of surprises. He walked down to the bullpen with a spring in his step. McGee scowled at him. “Why were you with Vance?”

Tony smirked. “Sorry McNosey, you don’t have the security clearance.”

“We all have the same high-security clearance so that is not an excuse.” Ziva sniffed.

“That’s right.” Tim nodded.

Tony actually snorted because he didn’t realise the junior agent was so clueless. “Actually McNonsense no we don’t. Ziva’s is limited on the grounds that she is not an American Agent” Tony took a deep breath and reined in what he truly wanted to say on the matter. He was of the opinion that the Mossad Agent shouldn’t be on the MCRT but knew he would be ignored on the matter.

“But you and I have the same clearance don’t we?” McGee asked no longer so snotty about it, he was curious.

Tony shook his head. “Nope, you see all the times I get loaned out to play with others in the alphabet soup means my clearance for various agencies has to be quite high. I have no idea if Gibbs or I have the highest and I know better than to ask.”

Tim flushed and looked back at his computer screen and Ziva had also gone very quiet. Tony was guessing it was because she didn’t want to draw attention to the fact he’d mentioned. It didn’t matter too much as it had done what he wanted - deflected attention from him. He would take the quiet day and work through the paperwork being SFA generated.
Later that day, Tony packed up having completed his work, “Bye McLate and Ziva. I shall see you on Monday.”

“There is paperwork to complete Tony, you can’t just leave.” Tim said with glee.

Tony smirked back. “Yes, there is and boys and girls you better not leave until it is in Gibbs’ inbox. Alas, mine already is ... Have a good weekend ... whenever it starts.”

It was only when he left that they cursed. “We meant to quiz him about his significant other.”

Cameron kind of wished he could use the beaming technology but it would look suspicious to his lover. His transport touched down and he went through security - it didn’t take too long thanks to the military getting first call.

As he walked through the last door, he was greeted by the most perfect sight - Tony in black jeans and a white shirt. Ever since Cameron had mentioned it was one of his favourite looks - Tony always greeted wearing a similar outfit.

“Hey soldier, going my way.” Tony greeted with a sly grin.

“Pilot, how many times! I know you work with the Navy but you can’t forget that easy.” Cameron said, exasperated enough that his accent thickened. Okay, so maybe that was a deliberate ploy on his part to see Tony shiver.

“You’re mine, that is all I need to know ... Let’s get out of here, I got us a hotel room.”
Cam was surprised by that. “Why the change of location?”

“Nosey teammates who have no right to ask questions, don’t worry Jimmy will join us for lunch.” Tony responded and that was that. The couple walked out of the airport to Tony’s car and sped away to their room for the weekend. Tony was being selfish, he didn’t want to share Cameron with anyone.

Every time Tony and Cameron were together it was like their first time again, and Tony hoped they never lost that magic. “Damn, I have missed you.”

Cameron chuckled. “Me too, darlin’.”

If anyone ever dared call Tony darlin’ or any other variation of a nickname he would shoot them but not Cameron. “So how long do we have?”

Cameron chuckled. “Well, I have a meeting or two with General O’Neill on Monday but I am all yours until then.”

That sounded perfect to Tony. “Let’s watch some tv whilst we get a second wind.”

Cameron didn’t think it would take that long but he would never deny himself a chance to cuddle with Tony. The sport was a rerun but a football match that they’d both missed due to work commitments. “You don’t know who won the pro-bowl?”

“Nope.”

Tony shrugged and settled into watch the show, even if there was a more than welcome distraction from Cameron’s welcome wandering hands. Then their screen cut off ... they looked to each other.
The screen flashed breaking news.

They were both tense wondering just what could cut through the regular programming and it wasn’t one channel - it was all channels. “What the hell is going on?”

The screen cut to San Francisco bay and Cameron swore. “Shit!”

Tony guessed Cameron had a clue but the city that appeared on the screen felt special. He touched the screen as something seemed to jolt inside him. “Home.” Then frowned, disconcerted as he knew what he’d just said but didn’t recognise the word he’d spoken.

However, Cameron identified the word from his conversations with Daniel Jackson. What he was a little confused about was why his lover, Tony, knew the Ancient word for home.

Tony was scared and hated feeling vulnerable. “What is happening to me?”

Cameron hugged him close. “I have no idea but you bet your ass we will find out. Together.”

*It was a whole new world and they were both in for a few surprises, none more than Tony but it was okay with Cameron by his side.*
From the Ashes, everything rises

Therapy was a wonderful thing if you were willing to embrace it. Derek knew that now and with Laura’s insistence, he’d gone. It hadn’t been until he was in college in NYC but he’d gone. He’d finally managed to work through some of the damage Kate Argent had inflicted on him. Not all of it though, not by any stretch of the imagination.

He was in a bar, looking to make a friend. He wasn’t quite up to one-night stands but his last session had made him feel like he could at least try. It wasn’t like with his little fur problem that he wouldn’t have to be extremely careful in making a new friend - but he finally ready to give it a shot. Kate hadn’t managed to kill his sex-drive for good.

The bar was a classy one and you had to have money to get into it. You see, even in modern society, not everyone was comfortable in coming out of the closet.

His nose caught the most enticing smell he’d ever known. It was like woods, cinnamon, and the best old books. It was all of Derek’s favourite things rolled into one unique scent and that was when it struck him. This was his mate.

Even a week ago, if he’d smelt that delicious scent he would have ignored it not believing he was worthy of a mate. There was still that thought lingering in the back of his mind but a voice that sounded strangely like his sister told him not to be stupid.

Anthony DiNozzo Junior was in New York evaluating his choices having finished his OSU course. His original intention was to go and play pro-football but his injury had seen that idea turn to dust so now he was re-evaluating his life. He was in New York to see the Post Grad options at NYC or to look at the possibility of joining the Police Force and what his options there would be.

“I’m too pretty to be scowled at like that.”
Derek startled. “I’m not sure I know what you mean.”

The guy grinned, his mate had seriously stunning green eyes. “Yeah you do, I’m Anthony by the way.”

“Derek, and I wasn’t scowling.” Derek responded with the good manners he’d been brought up on.

Anthony was grinning proudly and Derek was not quite sure why. “Well, you should know that I don’t mind. As you’ve spoken to me and ignored everyone else.”

Derek found himself smiling. “Is that right?”

“Uh huh.” Anthony actually slid onto the bar stool next to him. He looked at Derek like he was a fascinating puzzle but Derek could tell that he was looking beyond his looks. It was refreshing and Derek didn’t doubt that his mate had similar problems.

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Derek and Tony had been meeting up for a few weeks before he introduced Laura. Oh, he wasn’t keeping secrets from his sister, and Alpha - it was just logistics and their schedules didn’t match up. Laura met Tony and adored him too, said she would love anyone who could put a smile back on her brother’s face. Tony shrugged and downplayed it. “I am just a simple grad student trying to stave off getting a job for as long as possible.”

It wasn’t quite true, with how messed up his family tree was - he adored psychology and figuring out why people did what they did. Still, no matter how many books he read - he still couldn’t understand Senior and had given up trying. He was real grateful to his mother for setting up the educational trust fund as it was allowing him to study without having to focus on anything else.

“A simple grad student? Hmm, not many of those are studying for a Masters in criminal psychology.” Laura said seeing just what type of man her brother’s mate was.

Tony shrugged. “Shh, don’t let people into my secret ... I like being underestimated.”
Laura rolled her eyes. “And that is fine, just don’t forget we’re all but family.”

Tony sighed. “Well, you should know that I’ve never really got to enjoy one of those.”

Laura smiled sadly because whilst she hated the fire that had taken her family - she had still got to grow up with an amazingly supportive family around her. They weren’t perfect and their fights would end up with their Uncle Billy, who was a carpenter, being called. Yet she had a family, Derek had already explained that Tony’s familial experience was less than stellar. “That’s okay, Derek and I will show you. You will be so sick of me that you will wish that I would disappear.”

Tony shook his head. “Never. I get the feeling that you are going to be the sister I never had growing up. Plus, I think we will drive Derek around the bend. It will be fun.”

Laura smirked. “So about that - Derek and I need to explain a few things to you.”

Tony had been expecting an awkward family meal - not **werewolves**. Derek’s face after the whole story had been told was like a kicked puppy (forgive the analogy but the face fit). “Why the long face?”

“You hate the fact I am a monster.” Derek said, and his eyes flashed blue now he didn’t have to openly hide.

Tony shook his head and cupped his face gently to lessen his harsh words. “Don’t be a dick, Derek. Why the hell would I care that you can go a bit extra hairy if your mood takes you? Or that around Laura’s time of the month I will make sure she has her favourite chocolate on tap.”

Laura cackled at the look on Derek’s face, he was pressing into Tony’s hand and then also scowling at Tony’s comments. She was glad Tony was a keeper, she wouldn’t force the issue or the like but if he asked for the bite - then it was his.

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Tony had indeed taken the bite when he was shot at a convenience store with Laura shopping. The
bullets were standard rounds so just stung her, for Tony the bullets ripped through his lung. She had protected him from the gunman in the shop but the gang war meant that she couldn’t cover all angles. She had whined in distress seeing him fall, blood splattering his chest. They had few options, he would have to go to the hospital but she needed to give him the best chance of survival. “Can I bite you, Tony?”

He nodded as that was all the strength and coordination that he had in the world. He didn’t want to leave Derek alone in this world. The only reason he hadn’t said yes was he was terrified of what would happen with Derek if the bite killed another person he loved.

He was dying so he had nothing to lose.

It turns out - he was an excellent werewolf and would run rings around his mate. Much to Derek’s annoyance and Laura’s unholy glee. Everything was going so well ... So after a few years, it just had to come crashing down.

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Derek had gone ahead to California, Tony was going to follow him as soon as his day in court was done. Tony had never imagined he would be become a jury consultant but combining his studies, his ability to read people and his werewolf nose meant that it was kind of a perfect job.

Laura, their Alpha, had gone missing and Derek hated the gaping hole inside he could feel. He knew what it meant but there was a stubborn part of him refusing to acknowledge it until a body was found.

Tony had explained he needed to report his sister as missing with the local Sheriff. Derek had done so but he was holding out hope, he traipsed into the Hale Preserve heading towards the ruins of their former home.

“Son, why was Laura here?” The new sheriff, Stilinski, asked.
Derek sighed. “She said there was something going on back on our land and she was coming back here to check it out. She hasn’t spoken to my fiance or me in two days and she has never done that ... not since the fire.”

The Sheriff knew that mattered to the family. He could only guess how tightly knit the two remaining siblings were to each other.

It was not like Derek could explain the truth. It was the best truth he could give. “I will be staying in the apartment complex downtown.”

The Sheriff nodded.”Okay, I’ll instigate a search and let you know anything that we find. Son, don’t think the worst. Can we call anyone?”

Tony breezed into the room having finally made it to Beacon Hills. “No need, I’m here. Come on, Der’ let’s go find food.”

“Not hungry,” Derek replied mulishly. He wasn’t stopping until he knew where Laura was.

Tony rolled his eyes. “Easy darlin’, you need to eat and you know Laura would lecture you also.”

The Sheriff chuckled because he had no doubt this was the fiance. “Hi. Sheriff Stilinski. We’re setting up a search for Ms. Hale.”

“Thank you, Sheriff. Here is my contact number, I will look after Derek.”

The Sheriff watched the couple leaving knowing that more than a few of his female deputies would be tripping over themselves to help either man. Too bad they only had eyes for each other. He turned the business card over Dr. Anthony DiNozzo, Jury Consultant.
The Sheriff’s son came in talking about several million things at once so he got distracted.

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That evening, the matter changed when they heard the howl. It was an Alpha’s howl, a demand for its pack but that wasn’t the concern. The howl didn’t belong to Laura.

“Oh God, she is dead. I could feel it but I didn’t want to believe it.” Derek crumpled to the floor and Tony immediately dropped to his side, comforting him as much as he could. Only he knew something else that Derek in his grief was forgetting - there was an unchecked Alpha running around and they couldn’t allow it to continue. The last thing they needed was hunters taking notice.

“What will we do?” Derek asked.

Tony let his eyes flash appealing to his mate’s wolf. “We hunt, and we avenge Laura.”

The second howl in the night cut through Derek’s grief and sent it spiralling in anger. It felt like the Alpha was mocking their loss. He’d taken away Laura, he wasn’t going to be allowed to continue his path of destruction.

With one look the couple morphed into their beta forms and headed down the fire escape. The hunt is on.

The scents in the preserve were very mixed and it made Tony do the wolf equivalent of a sneeze. Derek grinned at him and then he tore off into the heart of the Hale land. He didn’t need to slow down, he knew Tony would be able to keep up with him no matter what form. The growls from an Alpha were matched by the screams of two teenage boys. They sped up. The last thing they needed was for teenagers to find out about the things that go bump in the night.

As they reached the clearing, it was so much worse. The Alpha was there but his jaw was clamped
around the leg of the one shaggy-haired teenager. The other teenager showed a worrying lack of self-preservation. “Heh creeper, leave my brother alone.”

The boy was showing defiance and fear but defiance was overpowering the boy’s scent. Tony and Derek would deal with that after they deal with the Alpha. The Alpha looked monstrous, it was probably reflected by its lack of a pack. The murderer deserved no peace, they’d murdered Laura, after all.

The Alpha immediately reacted to the presence of the two beta werewolves, his eyes flashing red demanding their obedience. Tony snarled as Derek’s eyes flashed blue as a response. The Alpha morphed back into a human and the shock sent Derek back to his human form.

“Derek?”

The two teens had scuttled backward not having a clue what was going on but too scared to move too far away.

Tony paid attention to them because the Alpha could use the teens against them so he was glad that they had moved behind them. It was what Derek said that shocked him. “Uncle Peter?”

“Oh great, the psycho is Uncle Peter.”

So this was their Uncle Peter, who looked decidedly mobile for a trauma induced coma patient, he was going to be having so many words with the hospital. If he wasn’t satisfied - he would be suing them. “You look pretty spry for a coma patient.”

Derek snorted but inside he was struggling to comprehend the facts as they stood. His Uncle Peter, had murdered his sister, Laura, all so he could inherit the mantle of Alpha, but why?

He asked it trying to understand hoping there was enough of his uncle left to get through to him. “Why?”

Peter hissed. “Power, the people who killed the family are still here and Laura never took action. She
left me here alone and I’ve been healing for the last seven years.  *Slowly.*”

Tony didn’t need the other part to be said because Peter may have been physically healing but his mental condition had obviously worsened every second he was alone. He had no idea what to do here, this had to be Derek’s choice and he would back his fiance.

Peter seemed to freeze as the cloud once more covered the moon. “Bye for now. I will be back for my new beta and you both.”

Tony and Derek shared a helpless look because this situation was getting more and more complicated the longer they stayed in this town. They looked at the teen as the shaggy-haired teenager was looking at his arm in confusion. “It’s healing?”

Derek sighed because that was going to be a perfect recipe for a disaster - a hormone riddled teenager suddenly being bitten and inheriting wolf-powers. The teenager with him was one he recognised as well from the police station.

Tony decided to see the humour in the situation and it was probably for the best. “Babe, it’s a teen wolf. You promised me we would marry before we talked about children.”

*And it didn’t stop there, their life in New York was over but they found something infinitely better and more complicated - A New Pack rising from the Ashes of their Life.*
Making lemonade out of lemons (William Cooper-R.E.D)

Chapter Notes

So William Cooper is played by the delightful Karl Urban if you haven't seen the movie.

William Cooper’s life was going as well as it could for a CIA operative. Okay, so he had the ex-wife and kids cliche but his second relationship was working out far better for him. He was introduced to Anthony DiNozzo whilst on a mission. It turned out that Tony was on the same mission for SecNav because no one in the upper echelons of power seemed to communicate.

Cooper had walked into what should have been a simple meeting with a terrorist only to find a new player on the scene. He’d not been planned for and threw his whole plan into doubt. His earpiece started to spit curses left, right and centre. William knew what that meant - this was a fellow undercover agent, just from another one of the Alphabet Agencies.

“So who are you? I don’t need no more new friends.”

This situation just got even more dangerous and all because his handler couldn't do his fucking job. He was going to kick someone’s ass when he fought his way free. That was for damn sure.

Before he could answer the other UC Agent sauntered over and there was an exaggerated sway to his hips. If William didn’t know better he would think the guy was trying to seduce him. Now, William was divorced, not dead, and he noticed a gorgeous person but now was not the time. When he finally reached William he had a scowl on his face. “I’m sorry, Connor, but my lover is a jealous fucking sod who thinks he can barge into my life.”

Okay ... so this was not his usual out when an operation went bad but he would take it. The guy was hot, and cool under pressure so there were two of Will’s favourite kinks right there. If they ended up shooting their way out of here also, then they were unlikely to make it further than a wall.

If William was supposed to be a jealous lover, he could play that angle. He pulled the guy’s arm so that they were flush against each other. For the others it would look like passion mixed up with possessiveness - in reality, it was a cover to easily pull weapons. “Well, what the fuck am I supposed to think? You got a secretive phone call, you walk out and just say you’re meeting a friend? You don’t dress in your tight ass jeans to meet a friend!”

Tony rolled his eyes and pulled away reluctantly. “You are a fantastic bodyguard and you are absolutely dynamite in the sack but if you try this possessive routine again, I will shoot you in the dick!”

William wanted to snort at the way most of the men in the room covered their crown jewels. “Sorry, but you don’t meet armed friends without me, that was our agreement. It was non-negotiable.”

The terrorist, Connor Townend, was torn between obvious amusement and annoyance at the way their meeting had derailed. “I don’t know whether I should congratulate you for a concerned lover who shares your business ... or recommend couples counselling.”
Tony shrugged but now as he turned around, he had the handsome CIA agent close enough that there was a confident hand resting in his jeans back pocket. “We’ll work it out. Now let’s talk toys. What are you in the market for? How many and when do you want them for?”

Townend replied. “I want four pure virgin blank passports and four suitcases that can withstand airport security scans.”

Tony shrugged as it wasn’t a big deal and he figured that could not be the whole order. After all, you don’t meet a weapons dealer of Tony’s legendary status unless you wanted some serious hardware. “Okay, fine, I’m still not sure why we’re here though, you’re wasting our time.”

Connor shook his head. “No, I am not done. I want four SOCOM MK 13 rifles and they will need some modifications. I want the very best toy so they will need Nightforce NXS scopes, Harris bipod, MIRS night vision rail, Knight’s Armament M110 suppressor as modifications.”

They didn’t need to be the best detectives to know what this order amounted to - a sleeper cell about to go live in their country. Worse, the weapons picked were long-range terror weapons where they could strike anyone in the day in the middle of a busy block and it would cause fear to spread rapidly.

Will was impressed with the way the agent didn’t blink at the shopping list. He played it off. “Nice, I prefer the Remington 700. Is there a rush on the job as that will cost ya.”

“Friday at the latest.” Connor said in a gruff voice.

*Perfect - they had three days to figure out the members of the sleeper cell.*

Tony smiled like he didn’t have a care in the world even if it was far away from the truth. “Santa always delivers. I’ll text you a place to meet.”

Connor growled. “That is not how this works.”

Will stepped an inch closer not liking the way the terrorist was looking so twitchy. The other agent was in a class of his own though. He just laughed in the guy’s face but it was the type of laugh that sent good shivers down your spine.

Tony smirked. “Now, let’s make one thing clear. You need the goods and I will deliver them but I am not sloppy, nor am I careless. You’ve seen how upset my lover gets when he thinks I don’t play it safe. So I am not going to get pinched with hot merchandise. It will be yours in a place that I have scoped out to make sure there are no bugs in place ... or people who are interfering with my business interests.”

Will added with a smirk. “They don’t interfere for long.”

Tony added with a sly grin. “My honey is so good to me. Now like I said previously, we will be in touch with your goods. You continue to yank me around I will put the cost up.”

“Fine.”

“Excellent and we will be off. Ciao for now.”

Tony smiled and damn, Will really hoped the agent wasn’t just acting - it had been a long time. He and Michelle had divorced because of the job nearly eighteen months ago ... and because of the job, he hadn’t had any time to even think about sex.
Will knew they’d taken separate cars but this operation had just merged. He was not too unhappy as the guy was incredibly competent. They had to assume they were under surveillance and whilst his new lover had just kept the terrorist Connor Townend under a spell - for lack of a better way to describe it - he knew that would not last and he would be more likely to explode. “Meet at the Ritz, room 511.”

Tony nodded and threw himself into his Mustang. “Sure thing, Darlin.”

~*~

Cooper trusted that the Agent was where he said. He’d seen the tail and hadn’t shaken him off immediately - they were no doubt meant to confirm their story to Townend. He would let his lover contact Townend and drive the price up for the inconvenience of voyeurs but it would reinforce their story.

Sure enough, he was waiting for him in the parking lot. Will took the initiative and once again he slotted his hand in the guy’s back pocket.

Hot guy smirked. “You’re enjoying this aren’t you?”

“Of course not, dear.” Will replied aiming for earnest but his smirk ruined the effect. “We have flies and I know where the room is.”

Tony sighed. “Oh I know, and I never said I minded the hand. It’s just leaving the promise hanging there, you should know it’s not nice to tease a guy.

Will chuckled as he squeezed the pert ass with such an invitation. “I don’t tease. I am thorough in all the missions I complete.”

Tony sighed and fluttered his eyelashes having clocked the surveillance also. “I will hold you to that once we get home.”

They got back to ‘their’ hotel room and collapsed against their door, allowing themselves a second to relax and just be them. Then the hard work would begin, they would be demanding that their legends be interweaved together, or at least giving them a hard time.

Will held his hand out. “William Cooper, CIA. Right now, I am William Levy.”

Tony grinned shaking his hand. “Anthony DiNozzo, NCIS. Right now, I am Antonio DeFranco.”

Will smirked. “So let’s talk back-stories.”

Tony pulled him to the bed. “Yep, and we got to work on the intimacy thing. We need it to look instinctive although, I would say for no preparation we did fantastic work today.”

Will chuckled. “I will ream out my people and you can do the same but not before we know what we need them to fix.”

They were now facing each other on the bed, dipping so they were almost touching other. So ‘Tonio. Where did we meet?”

Tony tipped his head to the side. “Your legend - is it a rogue Marine?”

“Yeah, go with what you know. Plus, I could use my own record and just muddied the waters
around the exit.”

Tony chuckled and added. “Funny, I did something similar but mine was going native when I realised my boss was crooked. The only difference was in real life I became an NCIS agent, not a criminal.”

Tony knew how and when to say they crossed paths. “Well, how about you were part of the trafficking ring? We hit it off and disappeared together.”

Cooper shrugged as he couldn't think of a better answer. It didn’t matter what they said as long as they agreed. “So we made a joint venture mixing business and pleasure.”

“That is DeFranco’s style.” Tony answered leaning a little closer. “How about William Levy’s?”

Cooper quirked an eyebrow and leaned in closer. Close enough that he now could feel Tony’s breath against his own lips. “Levy is known to take whatever he wants and always has the most beautiful and finest things in life. Like you, for example.”

Tony closed the space between and the moans they generated were loud enough that Townend’s lackey went back complaining about what he couldn’t unhear.

Tony broke away from his new friend (hopefully more) and peeled away, rock hard and wanting what they just did not to be pretending for the sake of a case. One look at Cooper let Tony know that he wasn’t alone in that respect. Tony was brave enough to go after what he wanted. “Damn. If that is a trailer, I’m ready for the main event.”

Cooper chuckled, still hovering over the agent and let a little bit of Texas slip into his voice. “Darlin’ we catch this terrorist and I will treat you to the main event that will leave you wanting more.”

“Promises, promises.”

Only it was true and Tony and Cooper had unknowingly set themselves up as a two-man specialist troubleshooter team that split their time between NCIS and CIA. The trouble for their superiors, Tony and Will were no one’s fool. Any weakness the one agent had, the other picked up the mantle on. So when the CIA director demanded the couple for an op to take down retired analyst Frank Moses - it didn’t end well for the Director.
Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo was in New York to see his boyfriend. Pearson Hardman was the building he was standing in front of and he took a deep breath as this was the first time he’d met his lover at his work. This was going to be an experience in itself, he was wearing his favourite Zegna to blend in with all the wannabe sharks.

Tony knew who the King Shark was - and he was proud of him.

Tony knew where Harvey’s office was and for kicks, he walked through the associate's bullpen level. The associates might be learning how to be kick-ass lawyers but they weren’t too good at subtle, the way they all went quiet. It was the unnatural silence that made Mike, Harvey’s baby lawyer, look up. Tony was kind enough not to laugh at the way Mike’s eyes nearly popped out of his head seeing Tony. It was Mike’s fault that they’d even met.

Mike asked him loud enough for a few of the associates around them to hear. “You’re here for Harvey?”

Tony nodded with a winning grin. “Yeah, I surely am, I assume he’s in his office.”

Mike nodded. “Go ahead.”

Tony smirked. “Well then, I will see you later.”

As Tony reached the elevator he could clearly hear the baby sharks quizzesing Mike. Who is that hotty? Why is he voluntarily seeking out Harvey? What’s going on? and other questions to that effect.

Tony reached the level with the senior lawyers and again no one stopped him. They all assumed he was here for an appointment with his suit etc. He would have to have a word with Harvey about assumptions and security.
Donna is Harvey’s executive assistant and practically runs his life. He’d rung and thanked her personally for the gift at Christmas, knowing Harvey wouldn’t have picked it on his own. It was less ostentatious and more personable - it had a definite Donna touch to it.

Tony stopped by Donna’s desk knowing who really ran things around there. He whipped out her favourite cup of coffee from her favourite drinking place. “Here is my humble offering to the queen of everything.”

Donna looked delighted and gratefully accepted the offering with the appropriate level of reverence for a caffeine gift. “You are so cute, when are you throwing over Harvey for me?”

Tony chuckled hearing the guy next to Harvey’s office drop his drink at Donna’s question. Tony ignored him for the moment to respond to Donna’s question. “Oh, my divine goddess, if there was anyone worthy of such an action it would be you.”

She pouted and then a wicked smirk appeared on her face. Tony was guessing her next comment would probably break Louis. The guy was Harvey’s rival and had been listening to their conversation from the moment Tony had arrived at her desk and was obviously familiar with Donna. Sure enough, Donna said in her perfect deadpan way. “We could always share, I run his professional life already.”

Tony kissed her cheek. “Alas, you know he is never good at sharing anything. Who is Mr. Stalker?”

Donna snorted. “That is Mr. Louis Litt. He is the one who tries to ruin your lovers day on a frequent basis.”

Tony saw the flush and knew that Donna had hit the mark. Harvey had been behind his desk finishing his paperwork. Hearing Tony ask about Litt seemed to be the impetus to greet him too. “Babe, I thought your flight was later.”

Tony shrugged. “I finished my case and thought I would surprise you. I wanted to see your seat of power, so to speak.”

Harvey’s smile grew wider. “Your boss hates us, wicked lawyers.”
Tony shrugged. “That’s because he keeps marrying and ends up with alimony battles. Me, I just meet hot lawyers who I end up wanting to keep.”

Litt got over the messed up introduction and started to fish for information. “So you are actually in a relationship with Harvey?”

Tony gave him a look that he probably learnt from Gibbs. It was the type of glare that made perps confess every transgression they’d ever committed in their entire life. “I’m not sure why you think you can demand personal information from me, buddy. I don’t know you.”

Donna cackled at Louis’ screwed up face. He was furious and it was glorious. So Donna being Donna took a photo of it for posterity.

Harvey was laughing, full on laughing as this was like his favourite day - forget the stupid party they were going to. Tony getting one over on Louis just by being him, that was enough. He didn’t really care about what people said about him so he pulled Tony close and kissed him. A smile still on his lips as he said. “You are too good for me.”

“Don’t I know it.” Donna muttered because Agent Anthony DiNozzo really was quite special. Too good for Harvey Specter but at least her boss acknowledged this. He was also smart enough not to try and be noble and let this relationship run its course at Tony’s pace.

Louis had snarled at the kiss and stormed back in his office, no doubt contacting Jessica as if she would be able to fix things.

Tony smiled at the casual affection knowing just how difficult it was for both of them so he offered something in return. “Funny I think that too... so I guess we’ll just have to stay together. So are you ready to go and make your ex miserable.”

It was these types of conversations that made Donna think Tony was for keeps. She was well aware that Tony loathed high society events. After all, it was how Harvey and he had bonded sharing their mutual loathing of it. Tony was only going to this Harvard Law Reunion Party so Harvey could rub it in his ex’s face that Harvey had the hotter partner. She watched Harvey disentangle himself to grab his coat.
“Tony?” Donna said.

Tony smirked. “You don’t have to ask. Whilst I am glad Scotty screwed up and left Harvey free for me, I intend to make her regret every life choice ever made.”

Donna sighed wistfully because hearing that made her wish she would be there to see it. “You will have to give me all the details.”

Harvey now had his coat and was ready to go thanks to Donna’s little distraction. “So are you truly ready to get bored by a bunch of snooty Harvard alumni?”

Tony snorted as they walked away. “You really know how to show a boy a good time and remember, you are a Harvard alumni yourself.”

Louis walked out of his office. “Who was that rude man?”

Donna rolled her eyes because she’d just witnessed the entire thing and it was fairly obvious who he was. Still, Donna would answer him just so he was absolutely clear. “Harvey’s boyfriend.”

Louis snorted. “You mean he paid for an escort?”

Donna looked at the jealous rival. “No Louis, he doesn’t need to pay for it. Oh, and I would think twice before accusing Federal Agents of being sex workers.”

Louis paled.

&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*
The hotel was a typical monument to the rich, all marble and decadence. Tony looked around the hallway. “We can still take your first car and drive away, drink whiskey and have a good time all on our lonesome.”

Harvey smirked. “Well, you know that is a given. We won’t spend too long but there are some people I wish to see/put down. You know how it is.”

Tony did, after all, that was how they originally met with Harvey offering to be an outrageous date to his father’s charity ball. It had been glorious. It had resulted in his father wanting to ban him from every future charity event but unable to do so as Harvey had decided to become a patron of the charity.

Tony had been asked to check his weapon in the lobby. He’d stiffened at even the suggestion and flat out refused. “No. Not happening.”

“Sir, be reasonable, this is the Dorchester... not the streets.” The Concierge tried to reason.

Tony snorted and dismissed the attempt at logic. “And any enemies or bad guys will not care how swanky the hotel is. They will attack it anyway. Now, let’s make one thing clear... You are not taking my weapon so if that is going to be a problem let me know.”

Harvey grinned at the concierge and tried a different tack. “Do you often ask Federal Agents to check their weapons at the door?”

“Well no.” The concierge had assumed Tony was a lawyer.

Tony rolled his eyes, flashed his badge and introduced himself formally. “Special Agent Anthony DiNozzo. NCIS. Now, can we go?”

Harvey hooked an arm around Tony despite the slight height difference ... He grinned. “You are definitely going to be sexiest other-half.”
Tony laughed and that was how they entered the ballroom. Tony noticed the quiet and sneered. “You would think with a Harvard education they would have learnt subtlety.”

It was in moments like this that Harvey didn’t just like Tony, he adored Tony. “No, that is something money can’t get you.”

Scotty sauntered up to him as if she had the right. “Harvey, you actually came.”

Harvey smiled and added sweetly with a little bit of a smirk. “Well, it was Tony that convinced me.”

She looked him up and down, and her glare didn’t have anything on the scumbags he’d dealt with. She had a sly grin on her face as she asked him. “So you pick a man after me?”

Tony rolled his eyes and pushed a little further into Harvey’s embrace. “Oh sweetheart, your makeup is all wrong. I can still see the green peeking through.”

Harvey smirked. “You know Scotty, I’ve always liked the finer things in life. Thankfully, Tony follows the same principles. Oh, look, over there. Isn’t that your husband?”

She gave them a scornful glance and tottered off on her heels. Harvey grinned up at Tony, pecking him on his lips. “Well, this has already been a great evening.”

*Harvey should know better than to tempt the gods.*

As not long after he said that an armed gunman came in waving a semi-automatic gun around. Tony’s natural instincts kicked in and his own weapon was unholstered and pointed unwaveringly at the perp. “Everyone down on the floor.”

Tony was so glad that the party goers responded to the natural authority in his voice and they hit the deck. He is glad that even Harvey has listened not worrying about something as frivolous as the cost of a suit. The perp was shocked at armed resistance - stupid git should have done his homework
better. “You picked the wrong party to hit.”

“You’re all lawyers!”

Tony snorted because damn, the guy actually sounded aggrieved. He let the idiot perp into a simple fact. “No, they are. I am a Federal Agent and if you make me shoot ... I won’t miss.” Tony said, calm as anything because it was a fact. Gibbs would be pissed if he didn’t.

“She needs to pay.”

Tony had heard every crappy excuse in the book for why someone has the right to harm another human being. So he did a Tommy Lee Jones. “I don’t care.”

“I lost everything because of that bitch!” The man hissed.

Tony rolled his eyes because it seemed the idiot was full blown crazy. “And you are going to lose your life, at the very least your liberty if you do not put down the gun.”

“You won’t shoot.”

Tony snorted and cocked the gun. “You have until three to put the gun down and back away otherwise you won’t be able to pick up anything with your dominant hand ever again.”

There was a tense silence that filled the function hall that was masquerading as a party room. Tony was calm and in control. “1. 2. “

“Okay, okay.” The perp dropped the gun to the floor and took a few steps backward.

Tony moved and advanced on the weapon quickly to secure it. He never took his eyes off the crazy perp. “On the floor.” Tony was ever so glad that he’d kept his gun and cuffs with him. “Hey Harv’, can you get dispatch to send someone to sort this mess out.”
The hard adrenaline part was over and all they had to do was wait to be allowed to leave. Statements and bureaucracy were things that both of them were used to in their daily lives. After some time Harvey was done playing around, he dragged Tony back to his apartment and showed him exactly what he meant to him and he did it all night long.

Harvey was smart enough to wait until the morning before he said anything else. He needed to be sure for both of them that he meant it.

As the morning light filtered into his bedroom and flickered over Tony’s face he knew he was more than serious. He wanted it more than he realised.

The sunlight was enough to wake Tony. Harvey loved the easy, affectionate grin that swept over his face at just seeing him.

Harvey had decided he didn’t want the relationship to stay casual. “Don’t go back. Stay please.”

Tony thought about it for a second. “You realise this means I will end up a Feeb?”

Harvey kissed the pout off his lips. “You will be out of that toxic place and we will be able to see each other all the time.”

Tony hummed. “Okay.”

Harvey was gearing up for his next argument about why it was a good idea. He paused. “Okay?”

Tony chuckled pulling Harvey down on him. “Yeah, okay, why shouldn’t we be happy?”
And they took New York by storm terrorising criminals and defendants alike.
The Right Choice (Seeley Booth)

Angela didn’t get why Booth and Brennan were not a thing. I mean there was great chemistry between them but nothing ever seemed to happen. She just didn’t get it. No matter how much you looked or expected it never went past flirtatious friendship. Take for instance today.

There was some dinner Booth was expected at but he was delaying leaving due to the case. It was silly really because until Brennan had done an analysis there was no point hanging around as all he would do was drive the scientists mad. Her friend obviously agreed with Ange’s assessment too.

“Booth. You will be late.” Tempe was reminding her friend, she hated when people were tardy.

Seeley rolled his eyes at his work partner. She nagged more than his actual partner! He was polite enough to say, “It’s okay. Fed too, remember?”

Angela could see Temperance’s frown suggesting that her best friend did definitely not understand but didn’t care to unravel the mystery. “Who is Fed two?”

Seeley cracked up at the joke. “Sorry, it’s just Ton’ would have made more than one movie reference at that comment.” Tempe’s face suggested that she couldn’t care less about why in the slightest. He rolled his eyes. “I’m going - we know the drill.”

Angela perked up, wondering if there was some new gossip about her favourite sniper. “Toni? Is Booth seeing a new girl?”

Brennan looked up from her bones. She looked torn on what to say which was not like her friend. “You should ask Seeley.”

“How?” Angela asked out of curiosity. “What do you know? Come on Bren’ - you can tell me.”

Brennan shrugged her off. “Sorry, Ange. I have work I need to get done.”

Seeley met his date and kissed him with a grin. “I am so glad you made it.”

Tony rolled his eyes. “Shouldn’t I be saying that to you considering this is your agency dinner?”

“You know you love me.” Seeley said with a charming grin hoping to deflect from his lateness.

Tony snorted. “No, it is Parker I adore, you are just an attractive bonus.”

Seeley should be offended but he kind of loved the fact that Tony loved Parker so much. His son had had a rough few years especially when his mom died. It was thanks to Parker that Tony and Seeley had met in the zoo when Parker had got lost. “I’ll take it.”

Tony rolled his eyes, grabbed Seeley’s hand and they walked into the awards dinner. They kept up a polite conversation if that can be the word for it. Seeley would have loved to take his gun out and shoot the Agent, Ron Sacks, for rudeness but he had no intention of going back to therapy.

“You’re awfully brave being Federal Agents and out.” Sacks said straight to their faces.

Seeley’s hand curled into a fist until Tony put his hand over his and answered for both of them. “Not
at all, Seeley is a sniper and a Ranger. There aren’t many I know who could hurt him. And me? I just beat a genetically engineered version of the plague so bigotry doesn’t scare me. Besides, I learned long ago to ignore small-minded morons.”

Seeley chuckled as the sour expression on Sacks’ face was far more satisfying. Still, he couldn’t resist adding his own bit. “He doesn’t say that working under Agent Gibbs has meant he knows as much about sniping and being a bastard too.”

“You’re quite the lethal pair.” Sacks observed with judgement in his voice, Seeley was sure of it.

The only response Seeley and Tony had were a pair of feral grins. “Thank you for noticing.”

It turns out, Sacks was unequal to their stares and left in a hurry. Seeley smirked. “I love you.”

Tony grinned. “I know.”

“I can’t believe you just Han’ed me.”

Tony snorted. “That’s what you get for dating a movie buff.”

“And I wouldn’t have it any other way.” Seeley confessed and he wouldn’t. They’d been gradually getting more and more invested in the relationship, taking it slowly and carefully because even though they each had a whole host of issues, they both wanted to make this work. The plague incident had scared Booth, he was a protector but he couldn’t fight the infectious bacteria. Plus, the secrecy they had both agreed upon had hurt them both equally when Booth wasn’t told about his hospital stay.

“DiNozzo?”

Tony whirled around to see Fornell and Seeley saw the grin. “You said my name right! I’m touched.”

Fornell smirked. “Are you joining the right side?”

Tony shrugged. “I’m thinking about it.”

Now Fornell was intrigued because even though he’d made regular offers ever since Tony joined NCIS, he’d never expected him to say yes after being turned down so many times. “We’ll be waiting, and I will be cackling. Why now?”

Tony knew this wasn’t the time or the place. This was an awards dinner and he wanted Seeley to celebrate. “I don’t like some of the recent hiring practices. Wait, no that’s not it. My ethics can’t abide the choices so I am evaluating my options.”

Fornell was grinning, which Seeley could freely admit was a state that freaked him out just a little. “Is that so? Well, let me have a chat with my boss and we will see what happens.”

His piece said, he left the couple alone. Seeley was running the conversation through his mind. “I didn’t know you’re a friend of the AD.”

Tony snorted. “No, I am a source of wind up material to his friend, Leroy Jethro Gibbs.”


Tony laughed at Seeley’s face but dragged him over to the bar. “Come on, let’s not think about my drama.”
Seeley nodded but he intended on making sure that they did have a conversation. “Okay, if you’re sure.”

Tony was more than sure.

&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*&&*

Fornell was never the type to waste time. His boss was there and he needed to strike while the iron was hot. “You should go and have a word with Booth’s date.”

Charlie, who had been the head of the FBI for four years, looked quizzically at one of his assistant directors. He’d never really seen Fornell be gleeful unless he was causing mischief. The FBI director found himself asking, “Why would I do that?”

“You mean you wouldn’t want to have a persuasive chat with Anthony DiNozzo, who for the first time is questioning his place at NCIS.”

Now Charlie was paying attention, his old friend had spoken with such fondness about the agent he’d taken the time to look into the agent. To say he liked was he saw was an understatement. “In that case, I’ll definitely make sure I wander over for a chat.”

Seeing the Agent in question, the FBI Director decided to see them immediately. After all, now was the perfect time to strike. “Hello, Agent Booth it is good to see you, and Agent DiNozzo, it is good to see you here also.”

Tony smiled. “I wasn’t sure if I would be welcome working for a different agency.”

“Who says that has to be the case?”

Tony shook his head. “Has Toby already told you I am unhappy.”

“Something about hiring practices.”

Tony chuckled. “Well, we have a Mossad Agent on the MCRT and I seem to be the only one to have a problem with it.”

Charlie blinked and even Seeley was shocked. “Are you kidding me?”

Tony sighed. “I really wish I was but I hate keeping my mouth shut in the face of stupidity.”

Charlie smiled but there was no warmth to it. “I like you so I will raise the question with the president at our next briefing.”

Tony grinned. “That would be appreciated, Sir. Thank you.”

“Don’t thank me, enjoy your evening and then come in for an interview.”

Seeley had to tamper down on his own excitement, he hoped Tony said yes. Still, Tony would have to make the decision on his own. He didn’t have to wait long, Tony shook his boss’ hand and simply said. “I’m looking forward to it.”

Seeley looked into his lover’s eyes trying to gauge how he felt. He did love Tony but he was under no illusion about how much Tony hid from the world. Seeley expected to see turmoil and that was
not the case.

Tony chuckled seeing his lover’s face. “Look, I am not talking about my drama. I want to watch you collect your reward and then, I want to go home with you and cook pancakes for you and Parker in the morning.”

Seeley wondered how he got so lucky but he wasn’t stupid enough to refuse such an offer. “Sounds like a plan.”

The next morning Tony awoke to an excited squeal. He opened his eyes to a very excited child and he could feel his own matching grin appear on his face. Seeley grunted not quite being the same morning owl he was. Tony chuckled. “Morning Parker. What do you say to pancakes?”

“Is Daddy still asleep?”

Tony was not sure how anyone could be - but he was still sleeping. “Yeah, but I bet as soon as he smells the pancakes and coffee he will be with us.”

“That’s cool.”

Parker didn’t follow Seeley in his looks but in his attitude and character, he was like a mini-me. It was so adorable, Tony wanted to coo but didn’t, knowing that Parker would scowl. Parker sat on the breakfast stool happily talking about all the things that he wanted to do when they were all free. Tony listened intently to him and made a mental note aiming to make sure every one of those goals was fulfilled.

“So how are my two favourite people in the world?” A fond voice asked breaking up their conversation.

Tony offered him his cup of coffee with a kiss as payment. “We’re talking about the zoo, football in the park and dinner at Chuck E Cheese.”

His grin got wider. “Is that so. Sounds like you have a day all planned out Parker.”

Parker nodded happily. “Can we, as long as you and Tony are not catching bad guys.”

Seeley adored his son, in fact, he’d been the central and defining point of all decisions made for the last several years. And yet Parker never begrudged his job even when Seeley hated it.

The next day Seeley was at the Smithsonian and all of Brennan’s team noticed his unease. “What’s up?”

“Sorry?” Booth pretended not to know what Angela was asking.

“You appear to be restless and unsettled.” Zach observed.

And that brought Booth up short. If Brennan’s assistant was picking upon his social cues then he must be pretty obvious. “It’s nothing bad, I just hate the unknown.”
“We all know that big guy.”

Booth rolled his eyes at Angela because he was aware that he wore his heart on his sleeve. “It’ll be sorted soon.”

Tempe just frowned at him knowing that he had the opportunity to tell her if he wished but she wouldn’t push him.

All of the Smithsonian team turned at once upon hearing the throaty chuckle. The man was a registered visitor and was wearing a Federal badge.

Angela looked him up and down. “Now this is a Federal Agent who knows how to dress. No offense, Booth.

“Why would you say no offense if by your speech you cause offense.” Zach asked causing Hodgins and Booth to laugh at the disgruntled look on Angela’s face.

“I don’t know buddy and talking about teases ... what happened?”

Tony grinned. “As soon as my notice is served I will be a special investigator for the director.”

Booth punched the air with joy. “Oh thank god you are going to be away from those douches.”

“Douches?” Tempe asked.

“Who’s the hottie?” Was Ange’s question at the same time.

Tony grinned. “I am his, or to the wider world, Agent Anthony DiNozzo. And now I will be one of the Feebs... I can’t believe you convinced me to join.”

Seeley had a crooked grin. “I think that was Parker asking you if you would you protect Daddy at work.”

Tony leaned in for a kiss uncaring of the group watching on. “Well, what can I say? I told you I adored your kid.”

Seeley smirked. “Our kid, or did he not ask if he could call you, Pops?”

“He did.”

“So... you’re together?”

Tony was standing proudly by Booth’s side. “That’s right. Now, I would happily chat with all of you for the rest of the day but I really need to go and shove my resignation up my soon-to-be-ex-boss’ ass.”

Ange was miffed because with that, the pair walked out. “You can’t just leave it there.” She called after them.

Actually the pair could leave and did. The reactions at NCIS were positively precious. Seeley had always made a point of supporting Fornell whenever he went over to NCIS and did exactly the same for Tony. Tony, well, he knew what Seeley was doing but he didn’t care - he was moving on and delighted in proving everyone wrong in the best way. Living a happy and satisfying life.
A series of Firsts (Derek Morgan)

First Date

Derek was looking at Garcia pleadingly as she put her case forward for his blind date. “Baby girl, I just don’t want to go on a date with someone I don’t know.”

Garcia tutted. “Now, my chocolate hunk, have I ever led you wrong?”

Morgan shook his head because Penny was his best friend and if he had been straight, he hoped he would have been smart enough to chase her. “No sweetness, you haven’t. How can you be so sure?”

Garcia grinned, “Let’s just say there are enough similarities but at the same time ... enough differences to keep it interesting.”

Derek huffed. “And if I can’t make it because of a case?”

“He’ll understand as he’s a Fed too, different agency though.” Garcia responded with a grin. “He is also considered quite the ladies man. The ironic part is he has never dated a woman the entire time he has been at the agency. Remind you of anyone?”

Derek knew what Garcia was talking about and misdirection was an artform. He dated but let’s just say Sam wasn’t short for Samantha like everyone assumed. Derek was not keen on blind dates but he knew he would not be able to resist Garcia’s pleading face for long. He sighed. “Okay, set it up.”

Garcia clapped her hands together in glee. “I promise you won’t regret it, Der’.”

Derek was not so sure but he trusted Garcia and even if things didn’t work out date-wise, at the least he’d have another Fed as a contact and may even have a new friend.

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Tony had picked a sports bar knowing that none of his team at NCIS would be caught dead in such a place, feeling they were above sport. Well, their loss was Tony’s gain as he enjoyed watching sport even if he couldn’t play it any longer. It was brilliant too as his favourite team, the New York Jets, were playing in the Wild Card round.
Garcia had been right when she had described her best friend as hot like fire burning. Tony walked up, glad he had worn his tight black jeans which hugged his ass and thighs perfectly. “Hey, handsome.”

Morgan turned around and looked him up and down with a teasing glint in his eye. “Well - you are everything Gracia promised.”

Tony smirked. “Well, she promised me you were hot like fire burning and she didn’t get that wrong either.”

“Flatterer.” Morgan managed to say in a bid to deflect, he was used to being the seducer and was feeling a bit off balance with Tony’s blatant flirting.

Tony shook his head. “Nope, just truthful. Shall we find a seat to enjoy the game?”

“Sure. What can I get ya?” Derek asked, nodding at the bar.

Tony smiled. “An IPA please.”

“Sure thing.”

Derek sat down and relaxed a little, he’d already shaken off the feeling that this would be an unmitigated disaster. An easy conversation flowed between the couple and as the evening stretched on they seemed to gravitate closer. They weren’t the type to make excuses about saving space as the bar filled up. They wanted to sit closer so they were touching, so they did.

Tony saw the text on his phone and groaned at the last snitty message from Kate. She was really getting on his last nerve at the moment. Good god, she thought he was a shallow, womanising, partying frat boy who hadn’t grown past his college days, an *x-rated Peter Pan* in her own words, and she was supposed to be a profile r.

Derek smirked at the eye-roll. “You gonna share?”

“A team member seems to enjoy being extra-bitchy at the moment.”

“What’s her problem?” Derek asked and if Tony hadn’t already started to adore Derek - he would right now. The question threw him a little because never before had anyone assumed it was the other person who had the issue.

Tony snorted. “She believes the image I project a little too much.”

“In what way?”
Tony answered Derek as it was said in such a way as to be completely non-judgemental. “Well, when I joined the force being out was just not an option. It didn’t matter how well you could handle yourself, you would have been dead through lack of backup.”

Derek gripped Tony’s hand because he’d started in Chicago and he knew exactly what Tony was talking about, it had been his worse fear when he’d been part of the bomb disposal team. There were a lot of very easy messy cases that could have gone conveniently wrong if any of his colleagues had found out about his sexual practices. “I know the routine of a ladies man, I’ve played it.”

Tony smiled weakly as he was glad that he didn’t have to explain it. Plus, he really liked Derek so the last thing he wanted Derek to think was that he was a player and not too interested when he was.

Tony decided to just shoot straight and not waste time playing games. “Look, I want to meet up again. Are you game?”

Derek slid a little closer, eyes on the prize. He’d been wanting to taste those lips for a while. He grinned and said a little lower than normal. “Depends on one thing.”

“What’s that?”

Derek swooped in kissing him slowly, savouring it, wanting to build tension for their next date.

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First “I love you”

Derek opened the door to his place and he was surprised by the heap he found on his couch. Any exhaustion he felt disappeared seeing Tony sitting scrunched up like he was trying to make himself as small as possible. Derek was concerned by how morose and sad his partner looked.

“Babe?”

Tony looked up with bloodshot eyes, the type you get when you have been awake for well over twenty-four hours and you can’t sleep because adrenaline is coursing through your system. He managed a weak. “Hey.”

Derek didn’t like the fragility he was witnessing. What the hell was his team playing at leaving him alone? He was just relieved that Tony had come here rather than going back to his own apartment to settle his demons. If he was going to help, Derek needed to ask. “What happened?”

Tony chuckled but it was devoid of any humour. “Bad undercover op. Let’s just say that it did not go to plan.”

“You said you were hunting antiques.” Derek said with confusion because this was why he was so
confused by Tony’s reaction.

“Yeah, it turned out way more complicated. The one we targeted wasn’t the submissive partner and was, in fact, the serial killer. So I just spent twenty-fours handcuffed to a lunatic. It ended when he tried to slit my throat.”

Derek pulled him close not liking the idea that Tony could have died today at all. In fact, just the thought made him feel cold. He found himself staring at the dark line on Tony’s throat with anger. He knew without his lover having to say anything how the situation was resolved. If Tony was here, then the serial killer was dead. “I don’t care about him. I’m just glad you are still here, so whatever you had to do was worth it as far as I’m concerned.”

Tony whispered so quietly that if Derek hadn’t been hugging him he wouldn’t have heard. “I liked him.”

Derek sighed because that was the one part of undercover he didn’t envy - to be successful you had to get close and sometimes it was hard to keep that mental and emotional distance. “Yeah, well, I love you and I’m so glad you did what was necessary to still be here.”

Tony froze for a second before coming alive in his lap not so morose all of a sudden. “You love me?”

Derek nodded wondering at the look of awe on his lover’s face. “Yeah, I do.”

Tony bit his lip. “Love you, too.”

Derek understood in that second. Tony hadn’t had much in the way of positive examples of love. Well, he would turn that around. He would get his sisters to help, knowing they would love Tony just as much as he did.

He vowed to buy Garcia the biggest and bestest chocolates he could find for the gift of Tony. “Come on, babe. Let’s go to bed.”

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**First Holiday**

For both Tony and Derek work had been pretty, well, horrific, one case after another with little downtime. So Tony had done the unimaginable - he’d applied for leave and he’d begged Derek to
do the same. He wasn’t stupid and he had no intention of letting either Derek or himself burn out.

Tonight they were at Tony’s as they seemed to split their minute spare time between their places. Tony needed his piano and Derek just lounged on his couch and listened to the sound the ivory keys made.

Derek knew what they both needed apart from time together was a vacation. He was not the spontaneous type but he wanted to be now. “Let’s go to Panama.” The music stopped short - probably because of his statement.

Derek smirked seeing Tony thunderstruck. It was not often you could rob him of words. “What? Not keen?”

Tony sucked in a breath. “Okay, loverboy. Let’s go to Panama.”

“Yeah?”

Tony nodded getting up from his piano to the laptop in the corner of the room. He was seizing the moment. He pulled up TripAdvisor to see what hotels would be available on their leave dates. “What are we looking for?”

For the next thirty minutes, Derek rested his head on Tony’s shoulder as they debated and decided on the details of their break. Their excitement grew as the plan solidified in their minds. The fact that they had just planned their first holiday together was not even noticed by the exhausted couple.

After Tony returned, he used finding that absolutely golden little photo of Kate to deflect any attention on who he was in Panama with. It worked a treat.

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First outing

Tony couldn’t breathe and had no idea you could feel so many aches and pains and still be alive. He’d gone downhill with scary speed. This was so bad, they hadn’t come back to tell him what he’d contracted but he knew it couldn’t be good. This was nasty and all he could think was he wished Derek was here.

He was so out of it, he’d forgotten that he’d changed Derek to his medical proxy almost straight after Panama City.
He was under blue lights and there were voices. Tony wasn’t so out of it to not recognise them, Gibbs and Kate.

“What do you mean you are not the proxy?” Kate asked a little loudly considering he had such a headache.

“Exactly that.” Gibbs said flatly.

Kate was confused and worried for Tony, a delay in permission could be fatal. “So who is?”

“SSA Derek Morgan, FBI, BAU.”

Kate wasn’t expecting that. “Why?”

A new voice interrupted them. “None of your business. That’s between Tony and myself. Now does someone want to tell me what the hell is going on?”

“Agent Morgan?”

Derek rolled his eyes and flashed his badge. “Gibbs, what is wrong with Tony and how serious is it?”

Gibbs knew who Derek was to Tony. He couldn’t believe Kate hadn’t figured it out. Then again, if she had never had true love then she might not recognise it. “This morning a package triggered our bio-hazard defenses at the office when Tony opened it. He inhaled some of the powder, it was tested and today it came back positive for the pneumonic plague.”

Derek had many moments in his life that defined him - and right here now, there was a new one. Tony, his lover, his partner, was dying on the bed - who cared about hiding who he was? It was not the time. Christ, his mind went to prayers he hadn’t used since he was a child. Tony needed a miracle - he must be so scared.

Derek would be there with him as much as he could. He wouldn’t let Tony suffer alone.

“You shouldn’t stay here.”

Derek frowned at the woman. “Lady, I don’t know you but if your lover was lying in that bed, would you leave?”

She shook her head and was indignant at the implication. “Of course not!”

Derek glared. “So why would you expect me to leave?”
And then her eyes widened catching the implication. Tony was gay. Jesus. They must have kept their relationship secret, what a way for it come out. She wouldn’t say anything - now was not the time. “Okay, I get it. I’m sorry. You should stay here.”

Gibbs nodded. “We are going to find the bastards that did this to Tony.”

Derek shared a look of agreement with Gibbs and so many things passed in that one look. “Good hunting.”

Gibbs just said. “Make sure he has something to stay here for.”

Damn, here, being on Earth. Derek would do all that he could to make sure Tony kept on fighting. Derek had followed all the protocols that Dr. Pitt had demanded but now he was here. He could see how poorly Tony was, he wanted to touch him and comfort him but he was scared to cause any pain.

Tony opened his eyes. “What are you doing here?”

Derek smirked although he knew it was a weak one. “They told me you were in the hospital. Where do you think I would be?”

“People will know.” Tony said.

Derek shook his head but making it clear that Tony shouldn’t worry about it. “I don’t care if they know I love a gorgeous guy. If anyone wants to be a dick, well, I still have my gun.”

“You’ll get sick.”

Derek wanted to smile at the way even though Tony was seriously sick he was still thinking of others. “Babe, you can’t scare me away with the plague. If you’re worried, the doctor assures me the danger element for infection has passed. You just need to keep concentrating on breathing.”

“Sure,” cough, he was wheezing but Tony needed to say this to Derek, just in case he never got another chance. “I love you.”

Tony, through a sheer miracle, survived. It was a long, slow recovery that Derek took time off for to support him. By the end of it, they’d moved in together and stopped pretending they were not crazy for each other if anyone asked. They were done hiding and let’s face it - if the plague hadn’t ended them - nothing would.

Their favourite first would be first marriage - when they walked down the aisle a year later. It would be their only time as well.

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