

Rooms

Author: CK

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Spoiler: Judgment Day

Contents: Jethro walks through Jen's house, every room bringing other memories to his mind...

Disclaimer: Nothing mine. Standard line - *Judgment Day wouldn't have happened!*

Author's Note: One of those "middle of the night"-idea... when you're lying awake and not able to push away the thoughts about NCIS, JD and Jen... *sighs*

Hall

It was strange. And yet so right. He stopped in front of this one certain house, he went to the front door, he took out the keys and he opened the door with them. He had never guessed that he would ever have keys to this door. That these would be *his* keys. And that he was allowed to enter the house whenever he wanted to.

But now, he was living here. He had left his own house, this building that had been his home, but then hadn't been anymore after the death of his first wife and his daughter. When he had been there, he had spent all the time in his basement. Never really looking into the other rooms, except for the kitchen. And even that had happened once in a blue moon.

Maybe it had been about time to leave this old life behind, to forget the pain and only keep the happy moments in his heart.

She had given him the chance to do so. She had asked him to move in with her and he had taken the offer. The offer to start a new life.

His life had changed, in every possible way. In his new home, with the woman he had fallen in love with so many years ago. The woman who had left him. The woman he had met again, who had become his boss three years ago. The woman who had conquered his heart again.

The woman he had now lost for good.

His mind went blank when he looked around. Red and brown as the dominating colors in this house warmed it even during the coldest day in winter. The wooden sculptures and chattels, the bouquet of fresh wildflowers, the small seat on the right, the big grandfather clock; the furnishing was well thought out in every detail.

Though he had felt home in this house from the first moment he had set a foot into it, it now all felt cold and unfamiliar. It wasn't the same anymore, without her coming out of her study when he opened the front door, greeting him with an embrace and a kiss. It wasn't the same now that there was no faint music playing in the background when in the evening, they had stopped in the nearly dark hall on their way upstairs, with him pulling her to him and swaying slightly to the soft tune.

Not because he was a dancer, but because he had taken every opportunity to hold her in his arms.

He would never hold her again. But he would hold the memories close to his heart.

Kitchen

Slowly, he stepped into the kitchen that was connected to the hall by a door on the left, only a few steps away from the front door. They had spent much time in the very comfortable room that was spacious and bright, and had a corner seating unit. Especially this sitting area they had used for their long talks, their conversations about everything and anything.

And they had used the kitchen to actually cook. He still couldn't believe that they had been cooking. It had been her who had started this, who had come up with this idea, and somehow she had managed to make him also learn it. And soon, they had been doing it together, conjuring up very nice meals.

The first time she had been standing there in front of the stove when he had come home late was one of the pictures that was never going to fade...

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"Honey, I'm home," he called when he entered the house, waiting for her to come out of her study. But nothing happened. Only after a few moments, he heard a voice coming from the kitchen - through a closed door, as he noticed now.

"In here," Jenny answered. Curiously he opened the door to peep inside. He nearly burst out laughing when he saw her standing there in a white apron with "Kiss the cook" written on it.

"Jenny... what are you doing?" he asked, although it wasn't necessary. He was neither blind nor stupid and the fact that she was holding a plate in one hand and a scoop in the other, and that there were pots and saucepans standing on the stove, helped a lot.

"Taking care of your dinner. Well, ours, to be exact, but nevertheless, I'm doing it for you." She was grinning widely, her Happy-Jen-Grin he loved so much and it was very hard for him to only give her a short Hello-Kiss and not pull her into a passionate embrace.

"And to what do I owe the honor?" She shot him a indefinable look, her eyebrows raised. "I'm serious, I mean, you're a very busy woman and I know how much work you've to do. You know, I'm the one who nearly has to carry you to bed every evening."

"I've decided that there are some other important things; that work isn't the only thing. So I'll cook once a week. And you'll help me," she explained, and giggled when she saw his shocked expression.

"You're sure you want me to help you? I mean..."

"Oh yes, you WILL help me. And you'll learn to cook just as I have."

"By the way, I had no idea you can cook. Seems that there are many things I don't know about you." She didn't answer to that, but concentrated on the food. Fifteen minutes later - he had only watched her silently during this time, not even daring to offer some help - she had finished her the meal.

"My grandmother gave me the receipt for the sauce; beware, it's hot and spicy!" She warned, but he had already taken a good mouthful. She suppressed a grin when she saw his eyes which were filled with tears. "Sorry," she told him, kissing his cheek. Gratefully he took the glass of water she put in front of him.

When he was able to speak again, he responded weakly, "Next time, please put some warning label on the plate..." He was interrupted by some cough and quickly swallowed the rest of the water.

"That's the reason why you should always take small bites, Jethro. It's not good to eat so fast."

"Anyways, it's really tasty. Thank you." He smiled at her lovingly, then they continued eating in silence.

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From this day on, they spent one evening of the week with cooking together. They had tried many different dishes; they had even invited the team a few times. It had been kind of a ritual and he had loved it. And he had missed it when she had been away on a business trip for one week.

Gently he moved his hand over the kitchen furnishings. Everything was clean and tidy, so unlike the times they had been working here. There had always been a mess, but even cleaning up had been fun.

Sighing, he moved the vase with a single flower standing on the table of the corner seating unit so it was standing in the middle of the piece of furniture. Momentarily closing his eyes, he then left the kitchen, turning off the light. Only the moon was now lightening the room a bit, making the chrome-plated parts shine.

Study

Entering the study was one of the most difficult tasks. So many of his memories had been made in this room, good and bad times had happened there.

He loved the room especially for its fireplace, bringing more than warmth in the sense of temperature to the room. The warm colors added to that made the study even more comfortable. There was this dominating, heavy wooden desk she had been sitting at so often, deep into the night, although it hadn't been that often anymore since he had moved in. The room's walls were nearly not to be seen; the sides without the windows or the fireplace they were covered by bookshelves and cupboards, and the glass cabinet with the glasses they had always drunk their Bourbon from.

His legs were shaking when he took place in the leather arm chair, right next to the coffee table and the fireplace. With the moon on the other side of the house, the windows here were black, like someone had painted them with the color of mourning.

How often he had been here even before they had been together again; how many arguments had been fought out within these walls; how often they had made love in front of the fireplace.

How he'd found her last words for him, neatly written on a letter. He hadn't found it earlier because normally, he weren't going into her study when she wasn't at home, because this room was her personal realm he had respected.

Now he was torn between staying outside and his fear to let the study fall into oblivion if no one was going to be in it again. Moreover, the letter was still lying on her desk; he didn't have the heart to change anything. And maybe it was also his hope that leaving everything as it was would bring her back. It was all he had left for his hope, for the part of him that wouldn't accept that she would never return.

Breathing was hard; it felt like an invisible power was pressing the air from his lungs when he got up and chanced to the chair behind the desk. His hands placed on each side of the letter, he looked down and his eyes and mind immediately got caught by the words and Jen's ornate handwriting.

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My dear Jethro,

I would never have guessed that finding the right words to start a letter could be so hard. I've thought a lot about all this, and it was no easy decision to make, but in some way, I'm sure it's better for both of us that I leave without telling you Goodbye. I want you to remember me as the woman you've loved, not as the Director whose security you were responsible for.

I know it will be very hard for you to understand and I won't try to explain because I know I'm not able to. Ducky might have already told you that I'm ill, and that this disease isn't curable. It's no comfort for you, of course, but trust me, we wouldn't have had much more time left anyway, and I prefer dying before there's only a mere ghost of myself left, a ghost in pain and without the ability to form any clear thought. I just hope you'll understand my decision; the weeks and months that were going to come if I was still alive were nothing I wanted to expect of you.

You can't imagine how much I wish that we could grow old together. I had wished for it for so long and when you had moved in here, I was sure that my wish, my dream, will come true. You had left your old life behind; you had closed the book of your past and finally found your inward peace. It had been good to see you unusual light hearted. Please don't lose this only because I'm gone. See it as my last wish; imagine me watching you and that I want to see you laugh.

In the lower drawer on the left side of my desk, you'll find a leather clad book. It is filled with pictures; some you'll know, others will be new for you. I have been collecting these for

different reasons, but now I want it to be the part of your memories, something you won't have to imagine, but you can look at. In addition, there's a DVD on the last page with the video of our cookout two months ago.

I want you to know that I've stopped regretting that I had left you nine years ago, because I'm sure we wouldn't have had the last few months if I had stayed. Maybe I do believe in coincidences, and maybe I believe in destiny, too. It was our destiny to meet again and to get the chance to start anew.

My Love, although I'm dead now, my love for you will never die. Look at the pictures and remember me and our times together; remember the laughter that had filled the house so often. And then, as a wise woman had once said a long time ago, 'look into your heart and hopefully, you'll find me there'.

I love you.

Jenny

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He hadn't dared to take out the photo album till this moment, but now he thought he had the strength to look through it. He had no idea what was expecting him, but he wanted to try it; to try looking at the pictures of his Jenny, even if it hurt. And he had to gasp when he opened the book. Obviously she had spent much time crafting this; there were not only pictures pinned into it, but also comments written under or next to the photos; even little gimmicks like a dried bloom or a piece of cloth were put on the pages.

The pictures were unique in every possible way. Many of them he knew, but from experience, not from the photo itself. They were showing situations he didn't even know she had taken pictures of.

Him and her, eating in the small sitting area in her office; it was one of their late night dinners they had often shared when she had been working late and he had brought her food so she would at least eat anything. Where did this photo come from? When had she actually had the chance to take it?

Her with Carson, the boy they had taken home with them for one night, to take care of him during a case. They were sitting on her office floor, laughing and playing cards. Well, throwing cards, to be exact.

Her in the beautiful ball gown at the Marine Birthday Ball; this picture must have been taken by Ducky. She was smiling; yet she looked somewhat lost and alone. He had learned to read her eyes over the years; or, in other words, he had improved this ability.

Another picture caught his eye; it was them both in front of the Eiffel Tower. So she had kept it. There had been many photos taken during their time in Paris, but somehow he had thought she had thrown them away. There had been only one copy of each photo and she had told him that it would be less conspicuous if she was carrying them in her bags; they had wanted to share and copy them at the end of their mission...

With a shake of his head, he got rid of the unpleasant thought, turning his concentration back to the pictures. There was one page left. One page with a photo that seemed to want to tear his heart apart.

It was a picture of him and Jenny kissing while standing on a cliff above Positano.

And behind them the sun was diving into the dark blue ocean.

Living Room

Only when he moved in into this house, he got to know a room he had never seen before.

A secret room, as he had called it in the beginning. It had really disturbed him because he hadn't even guessed that there was another room. But, as a matter of fact, there was one. Through a door hard to recognize as such that was located in the on the left side of the hall, right before the entrance to the study, one was able to enter the living room.

It was no special room, but a nice, cozy little one with man-sized windows and a door leading to a terrace. In one corner another sitting area was placed, but compared to the one in the kitchen this one was, of course, made to snuggle into and to sleep on.

The cushions were so pillowy that Jen had always somehow sunk into them when she had been sitting on the couch. It had been a very sweet picture, and now he wished he had ever taken a photo of this picture.

Across the sitting area was the television set. They had not spent much time there, but even they had needed some private place to relax that wasn't the bedroom; sitting there together and watching a movie had been their time without talking, without doing anything but relaxing and feeling that the other was just there.

It was a place he really had been at only with Jen. He had never been in this room alone. Maybe it had been "their" room, the one they were only allowed to enter together, and maybe this was the reason he still was standing in the doorway without any movement.

In this moment, he remembered what he was holding in his hand - the DVD from the album. He wanted to watch it and that was only possible in the living room. It cost him quite an effort to take the first step onto the Bordeaux red carpet, just in time reminding himself that he had to take off his shoes. Then he walked into the room, slowly, hesitantly, and stopped in front of the television set to put the disk into the player. Automatically he then went to the couch, only to stop dead in tracks when he realized what he was doing. There were many things he would do, things they had done together he would have to do, even with her gone, but one thing wasn't on this list: Sitting on the couch.

He must have gone insane he guessed, avoiding furniture because some ritual, some habit was connected to it. But he simply couldn't forget. He and Jen had been building their life around their time consuming job, and they had managed to actually have some private life. And part of it had been to actually have some rituals, something that would make it possible to have a more or less normal relationship.

With the remote control, he finally sat down on the floor, and with his back against the coffee table, he faced the television he now turned on. Then he started the DVD.

It didn't take him long to realize that this definitely wasn't a video of their last cookout, but impressions from their "Sunday Escapes", as they had called their walks they had gone for every Sunday they had found the time to. The time to go out and just walk around in the nearby park, to flee from their everyday life.

Obviously she had always taken a camera with her – and shot him playing with the children, or sometimes dogs, running around with them, chasing them and being chased by them, laughing and frolicking around with them during a game of football or baseball. It had often felt like they were just a normal couple, like all the other parents. Jenny sitting on one of the benches together with the mothers of the children, and him playing with the kids, like some of the fathers who had been in the park with their families.

Just for a few hours, they had been a small family, too. None of these children had been theirs, but with diving into a completely different world, they had been parents on a Sunday's walk with their child.

Slowly shutting off the player and the television, he remained sitting on the floor, on the woolen carpet that was so soft between his fingers when he used his hands to support himself. After a terrible long time he lifted his hands to his face to rub it.

No, he wasn't going to cry for missed chances.

"Always admired your way with children. Ever thought of having any of your own?"

"That an offer, Jen?"

Why, by all means, hadn't he asked her again?

Upper Hall

Five steps here. Seven there. Sometimes it could be six.

He knew exactly how many steps it took to walk from the bedroom to the bathroom. Or from the staircase to the bedroom. Or from the bathroom to the guest bedroom. He had walked all these ways so often. So many times he had been there, first as guest, then as lover, and finally as inmate of the house and lover. Or partner in life maybe.

He knew where not to step onto to avoid any boards creaking. When he had been sneaking through the upper hall from the guest bedroom towards her bedroom, when he had slowly opened the door and then watched her sleeping, sitting in the nearly dark room, the moon only lighting her delicate form, her angelic face. He often had sat there for minutes, hours sometimes, till he had returned to his bed shortly before she would wake up and see him.

He knew which part of the carpet he had to give a tug to smooth the surface. When it had formed some small hills and waves as some carpets did annoyingly often when they weren't

fixed to the floor with carpet tape. But Jenny hadn't wanted to glue it to the floor and so he had gotten used to tugging and smoothing it.

He knew the origin of every scar the wooden floor and the carpet were showing, as he knew where the many different specks and blotches came from. They all were telling their own story and he had learned each one of these stories.

And he knew how Jenny looked like, standing in the upper hall at the top of the stairs, in a gown that would have been worth an emperor, smiling at him who was waiting at the bottom of the staircase; waiting for his princess, his queen, his empress.

Guest Bedroom

The small room with its door across the stairs had only a single bed, a nightstand, and a wardrobe in it; yet it was so quaint that he had learned to like it.

More often than anyone would have guessed he had slept in there; slept on the same floor with her, only a few steps away from her bedroom. It had been a disturbing and at the same time soothing thought; at least she had been near him.

At home, he had barely slept in a bed; normally he would fall to sleep under or next to his boat. It had been an unbearable thought to sleep in his bedroom; he hadn't since the death of Shannon and although he had been with other women and although he had been in love again, sleeping in this bed was the one thing he still couldn't do.

It wasn't that he didn't want to sleep in a normal bed. Every case that forced them to stay in a hotel was a nice change and of course he preferred lying in a comfortable bed than on the hard floor. But on the other hand, he had gotten used to the hard floor that had helped him more than once to feel that he was still alive.

When Jen had offered him to stay in the guest bedroom for the first time, it had been long before they had become lovers again. He had showed up at her doorstep one evening a few weeks after she had started working as the Director of NCIS, bringing a bottle of Bourbon and some case files with him. He knew she had never expected him to do it, but he had wanted to talk to her about the cases, to listen to her opinion about some things; and he had wanted to see if she still knew how to work and think as an agent.

They had ended up talking till the early morning hours, and because she hadn't wanted him to drive home as tired as he had been and as much as he had drunk, she had told him to stay in her guest bedroom. Complaining would have been stupid, so he just had gone upstairs, showered and then practically fallen into the bed.

He had never slept so well for years.

From this day on, he had often come over to her place, when the silence and dimness of his basement had been about to overwhelm him, or when he had just needed her company. She had never commented on it; maybe because she knew him so well.

He had never tried to follow her into her bedroom; it would have been for her to make the first move. But she never made any attempt to do so and they somehow had managed to ignore the tension between them. Mostly, they used their quarrels and arguments to relieve this tension.

At least for a while.

Used to working till he was too weak and tired to even hold his tools, in the evenings and nights he had been at Jen's house he had often laid awake, even if they had gone to bed late - or early, from a day's point of view.

And he had been thinking a lot, about everything that would come to his mind; but mainly about Jenny and their relationship. In the end, there had always been only one conclusion: He needed her. Nevertheless, she had been the first woman he had been afraid to push; to take the initiative. She had set unmistakable bounds to their relationship and he hadn't wanted to cross them. Because he respected her.

So he had started living in this room; staying more often in her house; the wardrobe slowly filling with his stuff; a seabag always in his car, in case he would stay spontaneously. And the room had always been free for him. She had never sent him away; like she had gotten used to him staying there.

To be honest, he simply hadn't expected this situation to change. They had been friends. Not more. They had been comfortable in each others company, although no one of them would have admitted it openly.

But changes always happened when you were expecting them less. He had left the room around a year after he had been her guest for the first time.

And with that, he had finally entered the house.

Bathroom

Gibbs had been away after Hiatus, but there had been no Margarita Safari.

As soon as he had opened the door to the bathroom, there was a flash of memories in his mind. The first day after he had been allowed to left the hospital. The first day he had been allowed to leave this building after his coma. The day she had taken him home with her, to take care of him. And he hadn't even protested. She had been talking to Ducky before, and they had come to the agreement that they couldn't leave him alone, that they couldn't let him shift for himself. So Ducky had driven him to her house, even though he had protested. When she had arrived home some hours later, he still had been there, a bit to her surprise; a part of her had feared he could leave, due to his stubbornness, she later had told him.

It had been a strange evening for both of them. It had been strange that he had remembered the time in her house while he had forgotten so many other things. It had been strange to be with her in her house after all that had happened. After he had nearly died, after she had fought for him, with him, because she hadn't wanted to let him go. They both

had changed; they had been forced to admit now what they had been trying to hide, to mask behind their friendship.

That there were still feelings for each other.

He remembered the thought haunting him the whole evening.

They hadn't been much of exchanging words in this first evening. She had seen how weak he still was, and had made him follow her upstairs. She had made his bed in the guest bedroom, as usual, and then drawn a bath for him. He could still smell the essential oils she had added to the water. They are revitalizing, she had told him; then she had ordered him to get into the bathtub. And he had followed her order after she had left the room.

He had taken off his clothes and glided into the hot water. He couldn't remember a moment in his life he had felt more relaxed. It had been so pleasantly, so soothing.

A knock on the door had made him look up; after a few moments, he had heard Jen's voice through the door.

"May I come in?" she had asked, and then stepped into the bathroom after he had given his permission.

She had given him a small smile when she had seen him sitting there, with masses of foam around him that left out only his head. Silently, she had laid some towels and a pair of pajamas on a chair that stood in the bathroom; then she had turned to leave. But he hadn't wanted her to leave.

He had called her back when she had already been half through the door, and told her that he would like her to stay - if she didn't mind. And she hadn't. She had sat on the chair and started to talk; to tell him of everything he might have wanted to know after he had lost his memory. She had told him so many things, mostly the nice and funny ones, and he had listened to her soothing, calming voice that had, although he had forgotten so much, been so familiar.

Eventually, she had started massaging his neck and shoulders, first with a sponge, then with her hands, trying to ease his tense muscles. It had been good that he had been so exhausted; otherwise he possibly would have pulled her into the tub and made love to her right there. But he simply had been too weak. His satisfied humming had made her giggle, what had him, in turn, made look up, lying his head in back, looking right into her beautiful green eyes.

There had been a long moment of silence, like someone had stopped the world from turning. They had stared at each other; eyes locked, breathe held, tension nearly tangible. After what had felt like an eternity, she had pulled away her hands that had still been lying on his shoulders.

"Take your time to get ready; meanwhile I'll air the guest room; some fresh air will be good for you. But don't leave the window open during the night, it might get too cold," she had told him, her voice shaking a bit, then she had left the bathroom, not even drying her hands.

He had gotten out of the tub, toweling thoroughly, and remembered the gentle touch on his shoulders that had seemed to be still present. His mind had been filled with so many thoughts, and yet it had felt blank. He had looked into the mirror that was hanging above the sink, sizing up his face, his features, and his scars.

Everything has changed. He remembered that this had been the only clear thought he had been able to form.

Somewhat resigned, he had put on the pajamas, and gone to his room. *His* room. Jenny had been nowhere to be seen. Obviously, she had fled to her bedroom, to avoid meeting him again in this evening, and had known all too well why - and that it had been a good decision in some way.

No matter what, this evening had been special. It had been the beginning.

The beginning of something that never should have ended.

Bedroom

There was only one room left. He was standing in front of the door, his hand on the door handle, but it took him a good while to open the door. Everything here was as they had left it a few days ago; the night before she had left for Los Angeles.

And it was also as he had gotten to know it when he had stepped into this room two years ago to change both their lives...

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He had lost his sense of time, but he could have sworn that it had been hours he had thrown himself around in his bed now, his mind filled with thoughts which didn't let him sleep. So many things had happened in the past days. Things that made him question if they were going to be able to pretend that they were still only colleagues and friends.

Groaning, he pushed back the blanket and got up. He left the room and knew exactly where to go. Not to the kitchen this time. And not for a walk. Only one destination was left. The only one that would make sense to go to.

It was around eleven in the evening and she had been lying awake for an hour now, thinking, musing. Things were getting more complicated with every day Gibbs was in her house. Although she was at work the whole day, although they weren't seeing each other much, it affected her - and she knew it affected him, too. Two days before, they had met in the middle of the night in her kitchen because they'd gotten thirsty just at the same time. They had been standing in front of each other for half an eternity, staring at the other in the faint light of the moon shining through the window.

Some sounds behind her bedroom door caught her attention. She waited; she knew who it was and that he would enter anyway. And she knew why.

"Jen?" he whispered when he opened the door, "Jen, you're still awake?"

"Yes, Jethro. Come in," she responded. Slowly he walked over to her bed, stopping where he would be not too close to her to intimidate her or her personal space. There was a moment of silence; then she sighed and got up. "Okay. I know why you're here and I know that we...", " she started before she realized that he was staring at her unconcealed. "Jethro? What..."

She was wearing only a short, thin nightdress. God, Jen, you also could wear nothing and it wouldn't make any difference!, Her mind screamed, and she felt her face redden.

"I think we need to talk...", Gibbs finally said, his voice low - and thick with longing. She didn't even get the chance to take a breath for an answer; he just grabbed her, pulled her against him and kissed her.

They didn't think about it; they simply fell onto the bed and forgot everything. They spent minutes with kissing, to renew the feel for each other; then Jethro rolled them both over so Jen was on top, and let her sit up.

The skin of her delicate body, barely covered, was shimmering in the silver moonlight; her light red hair, with some locks curled around her face, made her look like an angel; she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Seven years - and she had lost nothing of it.

He gently lifted her nightwear and she willingly helped him to pull it over her head. He had never expected to have butterflies flying around wildly in his stomach again, but right now, they were taking possession of his belly. His hands caressed her body, touching every millimeter he was able to reach from his position, while Jen was just sitting on his legs, slightly leaned forward, and watching him; her eyes speaking of passion and happiness and - love.

As he had done with her piece of clothing, she too helped him to lose his shirt, falling into his arms and against his strong body as soon as it was gone. She was holding onto him, not willing to let go of him, and not willing to miss his arms that wound around her nearly naked body to hold her closely, protectively.

Holding her was more than he ever would have dared to wish for, and he was savoring the moment more than anything else; yet his body longed for more, and he knew that Jen felt it, too, when she carefully pulled herself from his embrace, and sat up again.

Next thing he knew was that his brain was calling off duty when she started kissing down his body; and she didn't miss a spot. She knew exactly where she needed to place more fierce kisses, where to suck or bite slightly; where to tickle him a bit. She hadn't forgotten how to increase his arousal, how to make him will-less, and senseless.

But he hadn't either.

Just before she got the chance pull off his pajama bottoms, he regained his senses, turned tables and rolled them over, quickly pinning her hands above her head. She giggled; she hadn't expected to still fall for this old trick. He joined in and laughed quietly, remembering all the times he had done this to her all those years ago when they had been undercover. Every time she had wanted to bring him over the edge with her actions; but being the only

one to feel the pleasure hadn't been enough for him. It just had been much different to enjoy it with her; much better.

He had lost his ability to direct her to her height of pleasure just as little as she had. He hadn't forgotten what made her sigh, moan, gasp, and scream; and when to stop to make her groan with frustration due to the loss of his touch.

It was quite a torture for her, him kissing her as she had him before; never missing a single spot. Gently he nuzzled her neck, placed open-mouthed kisses on the soft skin of the curve of her neck, made her sigh with pleasure. She moaned when his mouth found her breasts, as did his hands when they released their hold on Jen's wrists. Those hands that then grazed her body, tickled her belly, and finally wandered lower to her hips, where his thumbs leisurely drew circles on her hipbone, before he moved his hands further into the direction she wanted them to. His actions made her gasp when he finally reached for the waistband of her panties, hooking his fingers under it, but never pulling it down. While his mouth still worked wonders on her upper body, his hands played with the last piece of clothing she was wearing, making her wriggle underneath him, trying to guide his hands where she wanted them to be, but he was relentless, holding her fast, her thighs caught between his legs.

She still had a card up in her non-present sleeve. While she let one hand wander to his shoulder and then around his neck, the other slowly went down to his waist, up and down his back to finally land on his lower back. She didn't take her time now, but immediately slipped her hand under his pajama bottoms, and her fingernails going over the skin of his buttock with light pressure brought her his attention.

"Don't, Jenny," he whispered, his voice hoarse.

"Then stop that," she responded, her voice also barely a whisper.

He didn't let himself please. Quickly, he freed her from her panties, and she did the same with his pants. The clothes landed somewhere in the room, carelessly thrown away.

She pulled his head down for a kiss, and so at first didn't notice that his hand found its way to her hips again, then directing straight to her center, till he reached this one certain bundle of nerves that would make wax in his hands of her. She squealed in surprise and lust when he finally touched it and one finger plunged into her at the same time, testing her. Not that he had expected her to be not ready.

Though he did good to distract her, her hands nevertheless weren't resting, but gliding from his butt around to caress and stimulate him. Successfully.

He couldn't take any more. He wanted to feel her, to feel that this actually wasn't a dream, so he let himself fall next to her, pulled her above him, and she straddled him willingly, but still not connected with him. With her hands lying on his chest to support her, she leaned forward and kissed him passionately; then she lowered herself onto him. Her fingers dug into his flesh; just as his grip on her hips tightened. Being one again after such a long time was more than an indescribable sensation. They still fit perfectly, and being joined was already a pleasure, even though they kept perfectly still.

She took her time before she started to move her hips, slowly, a bit teasingly. And he, too, thrust upwards, carefully at first, but soon his arousal took over, made him thrust harder, trying to get deeper into her, while she also was moving her hips faster, meeting his thrusts, matching his movements, trying to get as much as she could of him.

He could feel the tension building up rapidly, as he could tell she could feel it, too, coming closer to the edge. Suddenly he sat up, his body crashing against hers, the unexpected movement stimulating her now highly sensitive flesh and nerves even more, making her scream out her pleasure when she reached her climax, her muscles contracting around him. He held her so tight that for the blink of an eye the thought that he might crush her crossed his mind, but because she was holding him as tight as he held her, he didn't give it any further notice. His brain was totally caught up in the fact that she was still moving her hips, until he, too, fell over the edge with one last, forceful thrust into her.

Clinging to each other, they fell back to the bed, her lying on top of him, both breathing heavily, their sweat covered bodies glistening in the moonlight that now seemed to shine even brighter.

They needed a few minutes to be capable of any clear thought. When Jen lifted her head slowly, she was met by Jethro's eyes that were full of tenderness and affection, and she felt tears rising up.

"I love you, Jenny," he said, then reached with his mouth for her lips, kissing her gently, lovingly; there was nothing erotic in this kiss, it was only a tender touch of lips for the woman he loved. When they parted, she watched him for a moment, tears and something like doubt in her eyes, what made him unsure; till he heard her words.

"I can't believe that I get a second chance," she told him quietly. Then she fell back into his embrace, whispering "I love you so much." in his ear, with a voice full of tears.

From this day on, they had been happy; happier than they had ever expected to become.

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Gibbs was lying on her side of the bed, his head placed on her pillow. He breathed in the fragrance of her that was everywhere in this room, but especially on the pillow; the mixture of her shampoo, her body lotion, her perfume, and something that was just her.

With some lonely tears rolling down his face, he fell to sleep, dreaming of the woman he had loved, and still loved; the one he had lost in the reality, but not in his dreams.

And his heart.

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