

Lost Words

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Rating: P6

Spoiler: Judgment Day

Contents: The complete Dear Jethro - my idea of its contents.

Disclaimer: Nothing mine; otherwise I wouldn't have to write a story like this one... (no one of us would have to!)

A/N: Here we go again... I didn't want to write anything about this letter, but the idea wouldn't leave me alone. This one is kind of Gibbs with implied Mibbs and I really hope you won't hate me for this.

Dear Jethro,

Once upon a time, I would have told you this in person. Once upon a time, there had been you and me and nothing else in the world, nothing to come between us. Once upon a time, I have loved you.

Years come and go. The last nine that did so left me doubting my sanity. Left me alone and afraid of a future I once had chosen because I thought it would be the right thing to do. Once upon a time, when I still had been with you, when I had been happy with you, I decided to leave you.

People will say that I've been a really successful woman. That I must have been really happy because I'd reached so much. That's what they said, didn't they, Jethro? That's what people will remember when thinking of me: I've been the first female Director of NCIS, and moreover, I've been still very young for this position. They will say that I've served my country well, that I'll be and have to be honored.

Maybe they're right. But they'll never know that, despite my behavior, despite the responsibility I'd taken, and despite all the people I'd known, I've been alone. I would have given up everything, shortly after I'd accepted to take the position, only to be happy again, and if it had been for just one minute.

I want you to know that I didn't leave you because of my career. Let alone that I left because I didn't love you. I left because I was afraid that what we had would burst into pieces sooner or later, as had everything that had made me happy in my life. I didn't want you to have to accept that what was between us, and what has been better than anyone would ever be able to imagine, wasn't going to work forever. I had wanted to end it, before it could break, even though it had meant to hurt you. But I had guessed it would be easier to erase someone from your heart who had hurt you than someone you'd to leave because the relationship had come to a dead end.

I was hoping that you would hate me and that this would help you to just forget me. Today I know that hate is the strongest emotion, aside from mourning, and that hate will make you everything, just not forget.

I was neither mourning nor hating, and yet I couldn't forget you, not for a single day, in all of these six years we didn't see each other. The memory of you had always kept me going, always helped me in difficult situations. It had been your teaching and your advices that had saved my life more than once. And maybe it too had been my hope to meet you again one day.

Though the time hadn't always been easy, and though I had been afraid of working with you again, in the end I'd been grateful for the time. That I had the chance to see you nearly every day, to hear your voice and your

advices again. It had been your eyes that had helped to quite down, in any situation. Well, as long as you weren't the reason for me being outraged and upset, but then, I had preferred you to be the reason for my fretfulness, and not anyone else.

Only to know that you were there for me at any time was more than I could have asked for. Although we couldn't be together, for whatever reasons, you still were my heart, my soul, my conscience.

Therefore I had hated you for getting involved with Hollis because I feared that this was going to mean I would lose you as a friend, and in some way as the man I loved. But you know what? Since the day I'd talked to her in private, I'd known she'd be good for you.

I'm gone, Jethro. I know you'll mourn and I'm thankful for that. But your heart had been filled with too much grief in the past and you deserve to be happy - to get happy with someone who truly loves you. Hollis did love you. I'm sure she still does. So whatever had happened between you two, it shouldn't matter anymore, because you know that sometimes, it all ends too soon and you'll always wonder about the roads not taken. Hollis is so unlike your ex-wives, but is a really caring and honest woman. And she can make you happy.

If there's an afterlife, I'll watch you from somewhere. And I don't want to see you spending the rest of your life alone. Where ever I am now, I'll be happy as long as you're happy.

Never forget, you'll have my heart, no matter what. I regret what I did in the past, but I can't change it anymore and because I was sure you'd find this letter, it gave me some kind of peaceful feeling that you'll get to know that I've never stopped loving you.

And I will always love you, Jethro; whatever you will do now, I won't begrudge it to you. Just don't forget me. And please, listen to my words.

Love,

Jenny

A single tear falling onto the paper in his hands, leaving a mark right above the text, was the only indication that what he had read had touched his heart.

The cool and yet not uncomfortable evening breeze made his hair and his clothes move slightly, while he himself stood perfectly still. The sun was already half hid behind the horizon and the half of the earth warming ball that hadn't yet dived into the never ending ocean made a golden paradise of the world surrounding him.

Slowly he lifted the hand not holding the letter, revealing the bloom of a white lily. He looked at it intensely for a few moments, than kissed one petal, and let it fall into the ocean where it floated on the surface, gently carried away by the slight movements of the water.

He considered for a moment to let the letter follow, because he knew he didn't need it anymore - he had read it so often that he knew the words by heart. Every single word was written into his soul, every ornate letter, every well-chosen word forever save in his mind, before his inner eye. He only needed to close his eyes and saw it again, the letter, the words, and her handwriting, like a small piece of art.

He could even hear her say those words, her voice still in his ears, telling him softly of happier times, repeating over and over the words he had loved her saying so much.

But in the end, he didn't have the heart to leave this last piece he had of her behind. To let it vanish in the oblivion of the ocean; to let the water wash out the words that were so carefully written on the paper. So he folded it and put it into his briefcase.

Again he let his gaze wander over the calm surface of the ocean and to the sun, still shining warm into his face. To him it seemed like *she* was smiling at him through the sunlight, and in his mind he promised her that he wouldn't forget her. That she would always have a place in his heart.

He stood there until the sun was set, completely vanished behind the horizon, taking away the warmth and the smiling face of this special woman from his sight; but not from his heart.

Turning, he walked back to his car, got in and took his cell phone. A few seconds later, the number was already dialed and he waited for the call to be answered.

"Mann," a well-known voice could be heard through the speaker.

"Hey Hollis, this is Jethro..."

FIN

I should explain something: When I read that Jethro will get a lover and that she will be a recurring character, I hated her without even knowing her. All I knew was that she would be played by Susanna Thompson - ha, the Borg Queen!

But then, after watching the first episode with her, I had to admit that I liked her. As described in the letter, I think she's the right woman for Jethro. I am and will always be a Jibbs-Shipper; but now, with Jen gone, I wouldn't be able to bear seeing another woman than Hollis at his side; well, if there has to be another woman. She is good for him; at least I think she is.