

RAINBOW TALES

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Rating: P12 / T

Contents: Life has many colors - as has love. A Patrick/Teresa one shot series.

Disclaimer: I'm glad this fabulous show belongs to series creator Bruno Heller and his team, because I think they make a great job, and I wouldn't wanna see "The Mentalist" in other hands.

Author's Note: I always wanted to do a color series of some sort. I started writing the series, but suddenly my muse run away with all my ideas and my inspiration... So I have a terrible writer's block at the moment, and I hope that posting what I already have of this series convinces my muse to stop... blocking me and come back...

RED - A Sweet Apologize

She couldn't count the times anymore she'd been cursing Patrick Jane. It was his third year on her team, and he hadn't yet stopped being a nuisance. Certainly, a mostly useful nuisance, but nevertheless, he brought so much trouble that sometimes, Teresa Lisbon wasn't so sure if it - he - was worth it.

Still, he was a part of the team, and despite all the problems he caused, he also helped a lot. There was only one thing she needed to teach him - to follow rules and orders.

Their latest case started seemingly easy. A murdered woman in a strawberry field, and a jealous, vengeful husband running away when they appeared at his doorstep was what they were prompted with. But, of course, Jane contradicted the obvious suspicion. The husband wasn't the murderer - that was what he said. It wasn't unusual for Jane to not go for the easy solutions, and it also wasn't unusual for him to be right with his suppositions, what was proved only a short time later. They also knew he liked to go his own ways of investigation and as long as one of them - normally Lisbon - had an eye on him, those ways tended to be successful. And less harmful.

Yet sometimes, the consultant managed to sneak away. Like this time - much to his boss's annoyance. However - it, admittedly, resulted in a rapidly solved case.

As well as a total of seven complaints filed against him.

And Lisbon was angry. Solved case or not, it was her who had to deal with the complaints, it was her who had to explain them to their superiors, and in some way it was also her who had to take the punishment. Rather would she have worked a bit longer on finding the real murderer. Seven complaints during one case - a questionable record, and with the consequence for her that the time they'd been saved she couldn't invest in some free time activities, but instead in working late. *For him.*

What, above all, annoyed her personally, was that due to the fast solution and closing of the case, she'd been denied a chance she'd hoped for ever since they'd received information about the crime scene. Harvest some strawberries off the field. This one time, she even wouldn't have cared if she had committed a crime by taking two or three of the really huge berries. It had been almost a torture to withstand the temptation of those delicious looking fruits and her cravings when they'd visited the crime scene. Of course she couldn't admit her secret passion in front of the team, so she had hoped for some following visits at the victim's house. And the nearby field.

But with the case closed, she had no reason to return; quite the contrary, she would only raise suspicions if she would show up at that place. The husband had been furious at them for suspecting him, and Jane's special ways of investigation hadn't made anything better. Not even finding the murderer of his wife had helped.

When she turned off the lights this evening - or night, to be more exact - and left the building to head to her car, it was with a rumbling stomach and a dangerous lack of sugar in her system. Dangerous for everyone who would have crossed her way then.

Lucky for anyone, she made her way to her car without any encounters.

Instead by a person she was met by a surprise when she opened the driver's door. There, on her seat, lay a little red box with a fine red ribbon - and when she took a closer look, she also saw the tiny, dark red heart printed onto the box. Lisbon looked around, searching for any sign that would tell her where the present came from. Her car had been locked, so anyone obviously had taken her keys...

... which left only one person. She rolled her eyes and sighed. Yes, there was a lot he still had to learn. Although she doubted he ever would.

Curiosity won over before she could start the car. She had wanted to go home first, but suddenly she couldn't wait to see what was inside her little present, knowing from whom it came. A smile ignored every resistance and took over her face when she opened the box and saw what was lying there on a small pillow of velvet.

One perfect strawberry of the richest red color she'd ever seen, and its sweet smell filled the air around her and left her in a state of deep contentment.

Of course there was one person who knew of her secret cravings and passions. At least of this one. She wouldn't want to think about any others right now. Seriously; she feared she'd blush, and she feared it even though she was alone in her car on a deserted parking lot.

The first bite told her that the strawberry was as sweet and juicy as it looked. She barely dared to swallow it, too afraid was she to lose that wonderful, heavenly taste on her tongue.

And even though she knew he was watching her from the bureau's window - right at that moment, she was thankful enough to let him take part in her pleasure and delight.

END

ORANGE - Sunshine And Rain

Many people were weather-sensitive. They were happy when the sun was shining, and almost-depressive when it rained. Good weather meant good mood; bad weather bad mood. It seemed to be so easy. And yet it was so complicated.

Teresa Lisbon had never been weather-sensitive. She didn't care at all about the weather, as long as it didn't get in the way of an investigation. She hated it when rain washed away evidence like footprints in the soil a body was found in, or similar things happened, but other than that, the weather didn't influence her mood.

Or hadn't until now. For days it had been raining, and at the moment there was little hope that it would stop soon. And this really started to influence her mood. She left her home with an opened umbrella in the morning, she got wet whenever she got into the car and out because it was impossible to stay dry when even only a few seconds

without any rain protection - whether this was an umbrella or a roof. She went home in the evening, always armed with her by now best friend put up over her head, and whatever else she did outside, one of her hands was always occupied.

And she started to hate it. This wasn't normal anymore. She seriously expected that one morning she would wake up and find that her house had turned into a houseboat.

With no reason to go outside, but even more reasons to stay inside as long as possible - wherever this "inside" happened to be - she even worked late and used this to do all the paperwork that was already overdue. She had even considered sleeping on the couch in her office, but then she wasn't Jane and she needed a warm shower in the evening and her bed awaited her with eager anticipation. Or was that her who longed to nestle into that comfortable sleeping place while outside the world ended?

When evening came, Lisbon once again forced herself to shut down her computer. It wasn't that she didn't want to leave work - she just rather would have skipped the part that included leaving her shelter.

When she took her jacket and bag, she found herself missing one item that at the moment was almost important for survival - her umbrella. It wasn't in her office, where she was sure she'd left it this morning, and she couldn't think of any other place. Except for the bullpen maybe.

Yet all she found there was one Patrick Jane, lying on his couch.

"Jane. Have you seen my umbrella?"

"No." His perfectly innocent look couldn't fool her, but before she had any chance to demand back what was hers, he continued, "But you can take this one. May be a bit better anyways; yours was so depressingly black."

"Jane. This one's *orange*," Lisbon protested - she didn't want to be the only one with such a flashy rain protection, while most people on the streets had dark-colored umbrellas.

"Yes. And it's magical."

"Yeah, sure."

"Believe me. Try it. If it doesn't work, you can have your old one back."

"I thought you don't have it?" Jane opened his mouth to answer, but then hesitated for only a heartbeat. And only one.

"I don't, but I'd help you look for it then." She would mark it in her calendar should there ever come a day when Patrick Jane didn't have an answer. Eager to get home to her hot shower and her bed, she just gave in and took the offered object from the consultant. She would only have to cross the short way from the building to her car, after all.

As lightened up as her mood had been for a few minutes - not that she would ever admit that he could do that to her - the moment she stepped out of the door and into cold, wet air of Sacramento, her mood momentarily matched the outside world. Dark and rainy.

Lisbon grumbled. It would be so easy if there was someone to blame for that weather, it crossed her mind. So easy. However, complaining didn't help, and so she opened her umbrella and took a deep breath before she left the shelter of the building's canopy and made her way to her car.

The past days, she'd done that so often. Walked as fast as possible to her car while trying to avoid soaking her trousers too much with the splashing water. But this time, she stopped mid-step. Despite the late hours and the dark clouds, somehow she felt like she was standing in the sun. She was so confused that it took her a few seconds to find the reason and cause for that strange feeling.

Teresa gasped when she looked up and saw what had happened to her umbrella. Every bit of light was caught by it, and suddenly it seemed to glow brightly. It looked like a beautiful sunset - just above her head. The woman felt laughter well up inside of her, and when it finally broke free, she found herself overwhelmed by giggles and a happy, free laughter. Her feet began to dance on the wet ground, and water splashed around her, to dance with her, their rhythm carefree and lively.

Maybe Patrick Jane actually did have the answer to everything. Even if it didn't consist of any words.

END

YELLOW - Questionable Fashion Sense

It was all they were talking about this Monday morning. And the rest of the day. In every free minute, every time anyone new was around, every time anyone came along who could give some fresh ideas to their discussion, work was forgotten. And the gossip was on.

It wasn't only the team, or the floor. No, the whole CBI was wondering and speculating. Yet no one seemed to be able to come up with a satisfying and logic explanation.

It was like this the whole day. Even when the team was not in the headquarters, but working on a new case, visiting the crime scene and questioning suspects and eye-witnesses, there still was no other topic, nothing else that seemed to interest the agents and other employees than that one thing.

After all, it was about Patrick Jane - and if no one else, the consultant who was part of Teresa Lisbon's team was known by everyone. That alone was reason enough to talk about what had suddenly changed about him. Before the weekend, on Friday, everything still had been normal. Or, maybe not normal, not exactly the right word when it was about Jane, but at least it had been as usual as they all knew it.

But on this one certain Monday morning, it was like the world had turned upside down.

Lisbon's three agents sat together and whispered conspirationally, while their boss ignored all the trouble completely. Only from time to time she admonished Rigsby, Van Pelt and Cho that they'd work to do. It didn't keep them long from resuming their speculating.

It was late afternoon when they finally decided that they simply had to ask what all this was about. Another fifteen minutes of discussion ended in pulling straws. Or matches, for that matter. A game which, of course, Rigsby lost.

"Um... Jane?" The agent coughed slightly when he approached the consultant who lay on his couch in the evening sun.

"Mhh," was all he got as an answer from the man with closed eyes who seemed to be half asleep - though experience had taught them that Patrick Jane was, however he appeared, always fully awake and had his mind sharpened.

"Why... uh... well... why are you wearing... yellow socks?"

Jane cracked one eye open and began to grin. But he didn't answer yet; instead he sat up and shot a look in the direction of Lisbon's office, making sure her door was open and she would hear his answer. When her eyes met his, and he saw that tiny sparkle in them, he turned back to Rigsby and the rest of the team.

"It were the only ones my size Lisbon could spare this morning."

END

GREEN - The Last Of Its Kind

After Kimball Cho, Patrick Jane was undoubtedly the most diligent reader of Lisbon's team. If he wasn't sleeping - or pretending to sleep - on his couch in the bullpen, or killing some boredom with solving another case, he could often be seen reading. Books piled up on his desk and everywhere around his couch, left no space on the little side tables or the window sills. Some of those books he even seemed to read more than once; they were well-used, but also well-loved.

Despite this amount of books and therefore occupation, his team noticed him to be restless lately. He was looking for something, and that something he obviously hoped to find in a bookshop.

And one day, Lisbon and her agents couldn't bear it anymore; his restlessness was worse than ever before and, above all, he also wasn't a help when it came to their cases anymore. So their team leader took the initiative. After all Jane wasn't the only one who recognized changes and problems when they occurred among co-workers.

However, she would have never expected the solution to be so easy. Jane was looking for something. Something rare. And Lisbon happened to have it.

It was a lucky coincidence that the search and Lisbon's success in finding what the consultant was looking for, and his birthday all happened at almost the same time. So at his day of honor, he found a rectangular package on his couch; one he, at first, eyed suspicious. Only the team's silent - they knew he didn't wanted anyone else of the CBI to know about his birthday - congratulations encouraged him to open his present.

Seconds later he had to remind himself that his jaw needed to stay close to his head.

Before lay him a hardcover book of a strong green color. Jane didn't need to look at the title to know at an instant what it was. He knew that book; recognized that special tone of green and the small golden flower printed along the bottom edge of the cover. Once he'd read it again and again, when he was still a boy. Back then he had done it secretly; his father wouldn't have approved him reading such a book. Still he had managed to read his exemplar so often that in the end, it had almost fallen to pieces.

One day, it had been gone. But he had loved the book, he still did, and he longed to read it again.

Reverential he touched the cover with his fingertips, only to assure himself that it was really there. He was so lost in thought, and so surprised and awestruck that he nearly overheard Lisbon's explaining words.

"I noticed you stopping at every book store and shop we came across in the last weeks. So a few days ago, I sneaked into one of them after you were back with the team and asked one of the shop assistants what you were looking for."

"They told me they don't have that book anymore," he said, still astonished. Lisbon savored that moment; when did she ever have the chance to see Patrick Jane speechless?

"Well, and they don't. Actually, there isn't a single exemplar available in whole North America. Not even in second-hand bookshops. But," she grinned winningly, "I had one at home. It was a present from a neighbor on my first day at high school. To be honest, I never got any further than page two. But I'm glad that it now is in the hands of someone who is able to appreciate it and that it won't get covered in dust anymore."

"Thank you, Lisbon." The dark-haired woman didn't know what was happening to her when the consultant suddenly got up and hugged her. She had assumed that this book bore some meaning to him, but she had no idea that it was as important as his reaction seemed to indicate.

"You know," she began slowly when he released her, "I never read it because I didn't really understand it. Maybe... you could read it to me one day?" Had she really just asked what she thought she had asked? Lisbon scolded herself. What made her even think-

"I'd love to, Lisbon."

END

BLUE - Reunion

There was this one thing, this one coincidence in her life Teresa Lisbon had never really been able to explain.

Every male person with a significant meaning to her life - and at any time in her life, starting with her childhood - had had a blue car. Her father had been the owner of one, as well as her first boyfriend. The two of her three brothers who had a driver's license also had blue cars at home. Those cars were in all shades of blue, but however, they were blue. And even the man she'd once thought she would marry came to her one day and suggested a family car - in blue.

There was something, something that connected men important to her and blue cars. Maybe she didn't know what it was, but she knew that whenever a man in a blue car showed up, he would leave marks in her life. And her heart.

The moment she met Patrick Jane for the first time, saw his old, grey-ish blue Citroën pull up in front of the CBI building she knew he would be her fate. And in more than one way she was proved to be right.

The years came and went and the man with the blue 70's vintage actually left marks in her heart. So many it sometimes scared her; just a little, but it did, nevertheless. Patrick often made her life harder - but then, in the end, also better. Her team became a family, and Jane a vital part of it. And although she knew that it wouldn't always be like this, Teresa still hoped that it could last. They all did.

Once he had told her what he planned to do when they found Red John. His words had never left her mind, her ears; for years, she remembered this moment. A moment that showed her another side of her team's consultant, showed how vengeful and bitter he really was. No one else knew that side; it was only her he showed it to. Over the years he had told and showed her so many things about himself. Except for one - what he would do after Red John was caught, and provided that Jane wasn't charged with murder.

The day came. Red John was found and Lisbon prevented Jane from killing the murderer of his family, who instead was sentenced to death and executed shortly after. With Jane watching.

The moment Red John was dead, Patrick vanished. And with him his car. Where once it had stood, day in, day out, now was an empty space no one dared to take. It was like the whole CBI was waiting for his return. Like they all respected that space that had almost always been occupied, as Patrick had practically been living in the building.

In the years they had been working together, there had been times she had hoped she wouldn't have to see this one special blue car - that he wouldn't be there. Because he was a pain in the ass, because he made her work so much harder, because of all the complaints against him and the work they gave her.

But then there had been times she waited for the car, and him, to turn up. Waited almost desperately.

Just like now, when she spent every possible second looking out of the window, hoping that he would return. If she could asked a favor, she would ask to see this blue car again. Because she knew it would bring along a person, a man she didn't want to live without anymore.

There was no one to grant her a wish. That particular wish. Patrick Jane was gone and she had to move on, just like all the others. Those who had lost dear ones. Loved ones.

In the beginning, she was still secretly looking out for it, for the Citroën and its owner. Whenever they were out in the field, she used a minute or two to scan the area with her eyes. But after a while, she gave up. There was no reason to think he would ever return, and there was no reason for her to look anymore. That's what she told herself. And it helped, to some extent.

Patrick Jane had taught them well in those years together. With a bit of his insight in human behavior, in the psyche, they solved their cases faster than any other team. Sometimes with unusual methods, yet always within CBI regulations. They were good, and everyone knew it. And those who didn't were confronted with the team's skills sooner or later.

Time went by, and almost every day brought a new case to work on. It was routine, it was always the same, and Teresa began to forget what once she had been looking for. Until that one day when she already felt in the morning that something was different.

When they arrived at the crime scene this time, Teresa never took a closer look. Too distracted she was by the vehicle that looked so familiar that she almost feared it was only a figment of her imagination. But there, on a dune nearby, stood that one car she had hoped to see again for so long. And when she neared the car, she also saw the person standing on the beach, with its bare feet in the water.

It was the first time she initiated closeness between them; closeness she had always tried to avoid all those years they'd been working together, fearing herself and her feelings. But now she didn't feel those boundaries anymore. All she felt was happiness. And so she ran to him and hugged him, and savored the feeling of him hugging her back.

Just outside the city borders of Sacramento, there stood a house. In the garden, children were playing - a boy of four with curly dark hair and a girl of about two with long, blond pigtails - while their parents sat on the porch of their house, watching their children with content smiles on their faces.

And next to their house - and a grey-ish blue 70's vintage Citroën - waited an ocean blue SUV for the next family trip.

END

INDIGO - Optical Illusion

"This is much better."

If Teresa Lisbon had heard Patrick Jane's muttered comment - and she certainly had - then she obviously chose to ignore it. Ever since he had decided to occupy her couch in her office instead of his usual resting place, the sofa in the bullpen, Lisbon had gained a lot of training and practice ignoring him and his occasional attempts to get her attention. And so she did also this time - she simply ignored him. In her experience, he stopped bothering her soon after when she didn't react.

But this time seemed to be one of the harder cases.

"So much better," he spoke again, now in a sing-sang voice. But Lisbon wasn't giving in. Yet. Only when he didn't stop, but repeated his words again, which clearly indicated that he was on a roll, she sighed and stopped typing.

"What, Jane?"

"Don't you also prefer bright or warm colors over dark and cold ones?"

"Huh?" The CBI agent shot her consultant a confused look. What was that weird man talking about now?

"Why is the ceiling in your bedroom dark blue?" he suddenly asked in a conversational tone. For Lisbon, however, everything including a casual chat was out of question as soon as his words had worked through to her brain.

"You were in my bedroom!?" She shrieked in horror. She was dreaming. She had to be dreaming. Patrick Jane had just told her he'd been in her bedroom. Was there no place in this world she was left alone, where he wasn't snooping around? "When where you in my bedroom?"

"A few months ago, while we waited for your shrink to show up. I had some... time to kill. Just sitting on the stairs was too boring, especially while you weren't dancing around in your..."

"Jane!"

"I wanted to say t-shirt," he pouted. "*However*, I was looking for the bathroom, actually, and opened the wrong door. And was a bit shocked about your color choice."

"*However*, it is none of your business!"

"It's so dark," Jane protested, his forehead showing a deep frown that almost made her laugh. But only almost. Instead of laughing, she rubbed her temples with her fingertips and sighed. Suddenly she felt somehow exhausted.

"I like it," she said simply, defeated.

"Meh, how can you like it?"

"Jane. You're sleeping, no, *living* on a couch in the CBI HQ. Don't tell me about sleeping habits," she commented dryly.

"Yeah, but I'm looking at a wooden ceiling. Less dark than yours. Much warmer also," he defended, and Lisbon groaned.

"Listen, I..." Suddenly, there was the strong urge inside of her to stomp her feet. If she ever wanted to know how receptive she would be to Jane and his manners when she was tired - now she knew. "Why do you even care? It's not like you have to sleep in that room."

"Who knows what time will bring," Jane replied, and wisely closed his eyes, convinced that as long as he didn't see her, her death glare she was giving him right now with absolute certainty wouldn't be able to harm him. The woman herself decided to go back to her task at hand - ignoring him. Well, and her paperwork. She had almost finished her work anyways; she would survive the last few minutes.

Click-click.

Click-click. Click-click.

Lisbon's eyes wandered to her paperweight, and she considered her options. Throwing it and hurting Jane, throwing it and killing Jane, or not throwing it. At least the last choice wouldn't cause her any paperwork. On the other hand, the second choice would save her a lot of paperwork in future...

Click-click.

Grumbling, the senior agent looked up from her work and grabbed a pencil. This wouldn't cause her any paperwork, but certainly some satisfaction, she thought when she threw it.

"Ouch! Not nice, Lisbon," Jane whined, but finally refrained from opening and closing his pocket watch he had taken from only God knew where.

"Then be quiet now and let me work," she shot back. Her sympathy-level was in a negative area right now.

"Tell me why your bedroom ceiling is so dark."

"That an order?" She raised an eyebrow.

"What's to it? Can't be such a big secret. You want me to guess? I think-"

"I'm a small person, okay? I hate high ceilings, they make me feel small, and the dark color makes it look lower. Happy now?"

"That's cute, Lisbon. So you feel small in your own bedroom? You know, I could teach and show you how to feel a lot bigger in... woah!" He was cut off when Lisbon jumped up and approached him with an expression and posture that obviously meant that she wanted to eat him alive. The dark-haired woman was sure she had never seen the consultant run so fast.

END

*I'm serious. My bedroom ceiling actually is dark blue. And I'm a small person. And it makes me feel taller *lol**

VIOLET - Just By Chance

People were talking. And though they were one of the best CBI agents and a brilliant mind-reading ex-psychic, they had no idea people were talking about *them*. Maybe because they assumed it was only the usual chatter about the unusual duo. Or maybe they were too occupied with each other. Whatever it was - people were talking, about them, and they never even seemed to notice it.

It all started out as a wedding - an event with them not standing in the focus of attention. Because this wedding was the one of two of their colleagues and friends.

Patrick Jane and Teresa Lisbon were, like so many others, only guests. Admittedly, not only guests, but also very good friends to the soon-to-be-married couple, but still, they were guests.

When Grace Van Pelt and Wayne Rigsby had announced their wedding, it had been the Happy Ending to a long and hard way. A way with many obstacles they had to take and conquer. They had started out as colleagues who fell in love. They had found themselves confronted with a choice - relationship or job. They had almost given up, only to find enough strength to fight for their happiness. They had won. They had wanted their love, and in the end, they had gotten it - without losing their jobs or being transferred.

To show the whole world how happy they were, they chose to celebrate at a place symbolizing freedom and light-heartedness for them - a beach. Guests were allowed to wear whatever light summer clothes they had - under two conditions: no shoes, and there had to be at least one visible piece of a violet color. It was the one color, the couple agreed, that, in the right shade everyone was free to choose, wouldn't be too girly or too dark.

The wedding day arrived with wonderful weather. It was a perfect day in August, and the ceremony promised to be just as beautiful. A traditional wedding at a not so traditional place, but the guests loved it and everyone was happy.

What no one expected - least of all the couple - was that the husband and wife had to share the attention. From the moment the team's consultant and shortly after their boss showed up, stolen glances wandered to them from time to time, and people now and then refrained from paying attention to the main characters of the day's show and celebration, even and especially during the ceremony.

It wasn't that anyone really noticed the shared attention, and still there was a subtle restlessness in the crowd every last person, even the personnel, was confronted with in one or the other way. It was, however, only later after the dinner when even Grace and Wayne noticed what everyone else had already seen and wondered about.

"Wayne. Look at that. Jane and Lisbon - they're a perfect match," Grace quietly told her husband as they sat at the center seats of the long festive table and watched their guests around them.

"Yes, love, I know, that's what I've been telling you for years," the man beside her responded smiling.

"No, that is not what I mean. Look at them. Her dress and his cravat. They are in the exact same shade of violet." Curiously, Wayne looked up at his wife's words. And, indeed, it was as Grace had said. Of all people at the wedding, and all the pieces of violet clothing, only the two of their boss and the consultant were such an exact match that it looked like they were made of the same piece of cloth.

"Wow. The likelihood for that is like... what?"

"I don't know. Considering that no one else's clothes are in that shade of violet, and that Lisbon and I bought her dress on our shopping tour..."

"... and that Cho and I were present when Jane bought that cravat, and both our shops weren't even in the same district of Sacramento..."

"Pretty close to zero, I would say."

"And still, they match perfectly." Wayne started to grin happily.

"You think that means something?" Grace asked, and then nudged her husband to stop staring into their colleagues' direction with that story-telling grin in his face.

"Oh, that definitely means something. Especially at a wedding."

Maybe they were the last ones to notice. But in the end and with a little help from the newly-weds, they finally did.

Jane and Lisbon hadn't seen it. Unaware of their appearance seen through another person's eyes, it never occurred to them that there was such a striking similarity between them that had all guests talk and wonder. Being told, they at first simply laughed about it. It had happened only by chance; they, as their team had already surmised, hadn't agreed on anything, like a manufacturer or designer. It was only a coincidence.

However, it was a coincidence that wouldn't leave their minds alone. The teasing about its significance by new Mr. and Mrs. Rigsby and even by normally stoic and no-nonsense Kimball Cho had them thinking - and finally talking. To each other.

"You don't believe that, don't you?" Lisbon started warily after she had pulled Jane a few meters away from the party.

"Lisbon, please. Since when do you believe in such things?"

"I don't, but I'm asking whether you do!" she hissed, and Jane grinned.

"Yeah, sure you don't, I can see that. That's why you're asking and why you're obviously very concerned and nervous about it," he answered, not without a teasing note in his voice.

"Jane!"

"What is your problem? Let them believe what they want. Why do you even care?" The consultant was highly amused. It was obvious that Lisbon had her issues with the events, as people now seemed to think that they were a couple. Jane, on the other hand, didn't mind. People loved to gossip; it was part of the human nature. He knew that ignoring them was the best way to silence them.

"Because people are talking!"

"Well then, let them talk. Could be worse." With that, he turned on his heel and was about to walk back to the pavilion, but her hand grabbing his arm stopped him. However, before she could say anything, he took her hand from his arm and pulled her behind him back to the others.

"Jane, stop!" she called, making not only the blond man before her, but also some of the guests turn and look.

"Seriously, Lisbon, what do you want to talk about? There's nothing we can change right now. So maybe they will have some nice topic to discuss for the next few days, but after that, they won't even remember. After all it is Rigsby's and Van Pelt's wedding, not ours."

Straightening to be as tall as possible, and waving her finger in front of his face, she was about to reprimand him, but stopped herself at the sight of his grin. More than once she opened her mouth to start her tirade, but none of the words that entered her mind seemed to be right. Out of frustration she in the end did something she later would describe as something even she had never expected herself to do: she kissed him.

And with an almost deviant satisfaction she noticed his complete confusion.

The other guests, too, didn't disappoint her. Or them, for that matter. People around them were cheering and clapping, not even refraining from their enthusiastic approval moments after Teresa and Patrick had parted again.

"I take it you were out of ideas of what to say to me?" Jane joked light-heartedly and laughed quietly when Lisbon, though smiling, rolled her eyes.

"You better shut up now. You have no idea what else I'm capable of."

"Can't wait for you to show it to me."

Somewhere among the murmuring crowd around them, someone commented, "Knew it from the moment I saw their clothes.", and they grinned at each other before they lost themselves in another passionate embrace.

END

WHITE - The Story Of A Long Way

Once there was a snowflake. A snowflake with dreams and plans.

The snowflake had been told that its existence wouldn't last long, and so it wanted to make the best of it. It wanted to see much on its way to earth, wonderful, legendary earth, and it wanted to land at a special place. It didn't yet know what this special place was going to be, but however, it wanted something special.

The moments before its departure from its homecloud were exciting. As much as it knew it would miss home, the place where it had been made, it also was thrilled to see the world. The world below so many stories were told about among the waiting snowflakes in the crowd. Where the stories came from? No one knew. But every flake wanted to believe them, because they were so wonderful, like fairytales.

The departure from the homecloud - letting itself fall - frightened the young and inexperienced little flake a bit, but its excitement won over its fears. The moment it fell and saw the earth for the first time, all thoughts about home and its fellow snowflakes were soon forgotten. There was so much to see.

No snowflake ever knew where it would land. It could be anywhere, and it was a surprise for everyone to finally see where their way down would bring them. Our little snowflake was dreaming of a place with those strange two-legged, two-armed beings called humans it had heard of. Those humans sometimes united in love, a strong and magic emotion, and the snowflake dreamed of finding, seeing such humans, a couple, as it was told they were called.

The snowflake had always known that there were little chances to be so lucky; there were so many humans on that world below, a world indescribable huge that a small flake could easily get lost. And maybe never find the way and destination it dreamed of. But about that the snowflake didn't want to think. As long as there was hope, it would dream.

Time ran, and earth was coming closer. The life of a snowflake was, compared to many other life forms, not very long, but it was a lifetime nonetheless, and an exciting one. And our little snowflake loved every second of it. There were lights and colors below it, and a whole new world to explore. Maybe it didn't have much time, but that didn't matter - the only thing that mattered was what it made of the time it had.

The snowflake took in every impression it got. Closer and closer came the destination fate had chosen for the little flake and, a bit to its surprise, this destination actually seemed to fulfill its wishes. There were those legendary human beings. It saw them. Moving around, through a blanket of white of which the little snowflake knew were its brothers and sisters who had already made their way to earth.

And then, suddenly, the little flake spotted two beings that showed a different behavior than most of the other humans it had seen. Those two, amidst thousands of the snowflake's brothers and sisters, and away from the other humans, seemed to be close, like they were one. Their structures, bodies it thought this was called, connected closely, and as far as the flake could tell, they were very happy.

When the snowflake fell the last meters, close to those two humans, it heard them whisper.

"Patrick?" said the one that looked dark from above, and for a moment, they connected again.

"Mhh?" the other one, from the flake's above point of view looking bright, a bit like what had been described to them as the sun, responded. Then the first one spoke again.

"I love you."

"And I love you, Teresa." And then, they connected once more.

The little snowflake was joyous. All the legends about earth and humans and love were true. As true as the flake's dreams had become.

It had seen earth. It had seen humans. And it had seen love. The most beautiful thing in the world.

END

SILVER - Of Stars And Dreams

Loosely connected to "Indigo", but it's not really a sequel.

The nightmares had started about two weeks ago. They came out of nowhere, were suddenly there and tortured her. And Teresa Lisbon, though she racked her brain over it, couldn't find a reason, an explanation for the surreal, horrific pictures her mind created every night. She only knew that it made her life, and more so, her work, a lot harder. She lacked of precious sleep, and not being fully concentrated because of sleep deprivation could kill her sooner or later.

She had been lucky lately, as their recent cases were rather easy to solve. But this was still the Serious Crime Unit, and they would get a serious, and a more complicated case. She feared that moment; she feared the outcome.

Lisbon knew she should go and see a doctor. It would be the best not only for her, but for all of them. She put her team in danger as well. Nevertheless, the hard-working, eager part of her just wanted to ignore the problem, as she had always done in the past, hoping that it would solve itself. There had been no trigger for the bad dreams, and so she was convinced that they would go away just as quickly as they had come. At least that was what she told herself.

She knew it wasn't going to happen. Not after two weeks of nightmares.

But as soon as she told a doctor, and most certainly it would be a psychiatrist sooner or later, the CBI needed to be informed. And she would be sent home. To find herself in the solitude of her still only half furnished and equipped apartment with still unpacked boxes here and there, and she wouldn't feel at home, but like in a prison. It wouldn't do her any good.

At the moment, her desk was her best friend. The door to her office she now closed every time she went there for paperwork, and that gave her a feeling of being safe. No bed around to cause her sleep and therefore nightmares, and no one to see her, and the dark rings under her eyes. Those she hid with make-up, but if anyone would look just a little longer and a little more careful, they would see that healthy and relaxing sleep wasn't a part of her life recently.

She didn't want them to be concerned.

She didn't want them to talk about it.

It was the sixteenth day of oppressive tiredness after the sixteenth night of nightmares that would have made every horror movie producer proud. She couldn't concentrate on her paperwork, her headache was getting worse with every hour, and she prayed that no new case would come in. She was lucky. She left work as soon as her official working hours ended, excusing herself and her unusual early leaving with having plans for the evening.

Truth was, she didn't know how long she would yet be able to hold up. She contemplated calling in sick for the next day, only to get the chance to rest a bit; maybe with the help of sleeping pills, and if it had to be a few more than she already took to be finally granted some sleep; only a few hours of dreamless slumber to gain a bit energy, get some of it back.

With the last strength she could come up with she made a sandwich; she needed some food, at least a bit of a substitute for the lack of recreating sleep.

She could barely hold her eyes open when she ate her sandwich and drank some fruity beverage she had found in her fridge - she hadn't bought any groceries in more than a week - and anyways was eating more something she forced herself to do, while she rather wanted to use the time to try and get some sleep. Some peaceful sleep. Even after two weeks, she was still hoping that day, or night, would come.

Finished with her evening meal, she just wanted to fall into her bed when her doorbell chimed. For a moment, she considered ignoring it, but when the visitor didn't refrain from demanding her attention - and person - she gave in and opened the door.

She didn't know why she was surprised at all to find one Patrick Jane standing before her.

"Good evening, dear Lisbon," her consultant cheered, and hadn't she been so damn tired and exhausted and weak, she would have sent him to hell. Or wherever.

"Jane, I will only ask you once - what are you doing here?" His smile vanished instantly and his face grew serious.

"I'm sorry, I... know I... you haven't slept one night through for two weeks now, right?" He looked at her intensely, and then continued, "Nightmares?" His gentle voice showed genuine concern, and Lisbon felt her defenses crumble. She stepped aside and let Jane pass, before she closed the door and fell into the closest chair.

"I...", she started, but wasn't really sure what to say.

"Please, let me help you. I don't want you to kill yourself. Insomnia can... it can destroy you. Let you tell that from someone who knows," he told her right away, without any of his normally typical quirks or delays in providing information.

"You can't help me, Jane. Please, just leave me alone."

"I know you're not very fond of my ways of solving problems, but... if you only would let me hypnotize you..." He trailed off when he saw her shaking her head. "Lisbon..."

"Jane, I can't have that right now. I... you know I'm not comfortable with that whole stuff and-"

"Lisbon," he interrupted her, and crouched before her, "I know we have some trust issues, but you should also know that I would never do you any harm. I would never, *never* hurt you. I'm here because I'm worried about you and your well-being. And so is the team. They know something's wrong with you. They care so much about you that they are in a conflict whether to tell Hightower about your condition so you'll be forced to see a doctor, or to try and help you by protecting you from any work and stress."

"You and the team... you are..." the dark-haired woman began and suddenly felt her eyes fill with tears. Desperate she tried to hold them back or brush them away, but her weakened mental state left her more than deeply touched by her team worrying about her.

"You need help. Please, Teresa," Jane said quietly, and his gentle voice was soothing already. It wasn't that she didn't trust him; after all, it wasn't the first time he offered to hypnotize her. Last time it had helped. The only thing resisting now were the remnants of rationality that always refused Jane's psychic attempts.

In the end, it were only remnants. And she preferred his help over that of a doctor. Especially after her very own experience with psychiatrists.

"No funny things," she warned, but indicated at the same time that she was willing to try it. His expression was still serious, although his mouth curved into a half-smile.

"I'll save that for later, when your sleep level is back to normal," he teased lightly, and even Lisbon couldn't help but smile weakly at that.

"Well then, let's begin."

Thanks to her exhaustion, it was easy for Jane to hypnotize her. Soon she looked so peaceful, lounging comfortably in her chair, that Patrick felt sorry that he had to make her get up. But after the first talking - questioning - was done and he had found out responsible for her nightmares was a fear that had been buried deep in her mind and now had broken free, he needed her somewhere else for the second part of his therapy. Taking her hand to assure her that she was safe, he guided her dazed, absent mind upstairs and into her bedroom where he made her lie down on her bed.

"Okay now, Teresa, open your eyes. You'll see a thousand stars above you. Whenever your mind is filled with that image before you fall asleep, there will be no room for your nightmares," he suggested to her subconscious. Then he told her to close her eyes again. "No one can do you any harm. Your dreams are only figments of your imagination. They can't not control you, but you can control them." Pleased, he saw her nodding her understanding. "Alright. When I tell you you'll wake up, and you will know what to do to avoid any further bad dreams." For just a few seconds, he allowed himself to look at her, take in her features, so peaceful at this moment. "Wake up now, Teresa," he eventually told her in a low, calm voice, and she complied.

When Lisbon opened her eyes and slowly gained back her senses, she was met by the sight of her bedroom ceiling, the one she had painted in an indigo blue color called "Night Sky", covered in countless small lamps, twinkling with a silver light and giving her an impression as if she was lying beneath a star-filled sky at night.

"What... what is that?" Teresa finally asked, and slowly but surely, she felt a mixture of bewilderment and some anger creep up inside her, as knew someone - most certainly Jane - had been in her bedroom to do that.

"Please don't be mad," Patrick defeated himself almost immediately, "I was hoping you would agree on letting me hypnotize you, and had to prepare this. It will help you, trust me. I suggested to you under hypnosis that you would sleep tight and well, without any nightmares, whenever you are beneath that... starry sky. It will work."

She eyed him thoughtfully, and he was relieved to see her features soften.

"It... it is beautiful," Lisbon admitted when she took in her newly decorated ceiling. "Thank you."

"No need to thank me, really," he dismissed, a bit embarrassed. "Now try and get some sleep. Just make sure to look at your stars before you close your eyes."

"You really think it will work? That my nightmares are gone?"

"Yes." This one word, said with so much honest conviction strangely enough was all she needed. Or at least she thought so. But when Jane was about to leave, she found herself calling him back. "Would you-"

His hand was already touching the doorknob when he found the courage to ask something that had been burning in his mind for some time now. "Would you mind-" However, the moment he started speaking, he heard her voice at just the exact same moment.

They both stopped at the sound of the other one's voice and exchanged curious glances.

"You first," Lisbon offered, but Jane shook his head.

"No, it's not that important. What did you want to say?"

"I... I wanted to ask if you could stay... just... just to make sure there won't be another nightmare plaguing me. And in case there is, that you can wake me up. I never quite manage to rise myself out of the dream before it is over." She was babbling, and she knew it. Even after all these years of friendship, asking such a question, although meant completely innocent, felt like crossing this one certain line they'd drawn unconsciously in the beginning of their partnership. And it was something they both didn't dare to do, fearing the outcome. He was here to help her with her nightmares - but he was also standing in her bedroom, and she had just invited him to join her.

He didn't answer; instead, he shrugged off his jacket, walked over to the bed, sat down and took off his shoes and socks before he lay down beside her. Thoughtful he looked up.

"Maybe I should try that as well. The only problem is I can't hypnotize myself."

Lisbon chuckled lightly, but said nothing. She appreciated his attempts to lighten the mood, and to distract her from the prospect of falling asleep soon. He without doubt knew of her despite his efforts still present fear of another nightmare, and another frightful night. Shyly her hand sought out his, and their fingers entwined like it was the most normal thing to happen.

"Sleep now, Teresa, sleep. I'll be here," Patrick then whispered, though still not looking at her. She did as she was told, and with one last glance upwards to her very own starry night sky rolled onto her side. Unwilling to let go of his hand, she tugged at it, testing the ground - and to her surprise, he followed.

And when his body lined up against her back, Teresa knew that from this moment on, her nightmares were only mere stories of the past.

END

GOLD - Celestial Touch

She had been dating him for about four months now. Brian was handsome, intelligent, and a nice company. Besides, he also worked in law enforcement, what made it easier for her, as she didn't have to explain every late hour at the office or every scratch and bruise. No one was telling her that her job was too dangerous; no one was bossing her around and treating her like the little girl. She liked that.

When Teresa Lisbon and Brian Singer had first met, they both had felt sparks flying. Though back then, it had been more sparks of two thick-headed agents who hadn't wanted to give in. However, the attraction had been there - from the very first moment. After they had closed the case, they had started dating. That had been four months ago. And they were still together.

Besides the members of her team who had noticed some change about their boss - first and foremost their consultant Patrick Jane, who had *not very subtly* pointed it out to the others - no one really knew about her relationship with Brian. She wanted to keep it a secret; better be not so open about her new found... partner she yet didn't dare to describe as "love". She liked Brian, she liked him very much, but as a woman who didn't make commitments easily, especially not when it concerned her private life and her feelings, she took care of her heart.

But now 4th of July was only a week away, and traditionally, the team was invited to a big celebration. A celebration to where they were asked to bring their respective partners. When Brian invited her, she couldn't say no. So this was going to be the day, the evening, everyone would learn about her new relationship.

Her gut protested. It wasn't a good idea, it told her. Was it really time already to let everyone know? But then, it were four months. Four months - that was what she told herself again and again. Definitely a long time, considering that other people got married after only half a year. Or maybe even less. And still, it didn't calm her. She didn't want every last colleague to know about her love life.

Fate was generous.

Part of her was ashamed, but the majority of her mind and heart and gut were relieved when Brian told her on the morning of Independence Day that he didn't know if he would make it to the celebration. He had to work - crime didn't sleep, and certainly didn't care about any kind of holiday.

She told him it was okay.

He had no idea.

The celebration was nice, and the evening entertaining. She talked a lot to her colleagues, mostly her team, but also some people from other units. They shared some work stories, and some told about their family, about their children. Most people had come with their husband or wife; she hadn't met or seen anyone who was alone.

Did she miss Brian? Probably. She never wondered why she had to ask herself that. She took it that it was normal. So she was missing company, someone to be with her that evening. And who else should that possibly be than her boyfriend?

It was shortly after dinner when she excused herself and stepped out onto the balcony. The sun was slowly setting, vanishing behind the horizon, but the glowing celestial body had still enough strength to provide a comfortable warmth.

Lisbon sighed. If only she wasn't alone. She had been stupid to be glad that Brian had to work. All her fears and doubts were so *stupid*.

Her heart skipped a beat when suddenly, she found herself in a man's strong embrace. She hadn't heard him approach her, but only noticed his presence when his arms came around her from behind. He held her almost possessively, yet incredibly careful and gentle, and pulled her back against a muscular body. Oh, how right that body felt against hers; she liked the feeling of him.

Lisbon smiled when she rested her hands on his. "So you made it. I'm happy you're here," she told him quietly, genuinely happy, and wanted to turn around, but his arms held her in place.

"Shh, don't move," he said, barely audible, and kissed her neck before resting his cheek on her head. It was the moment she knew something had changed. Their relationship was more a passionate one, and she wasn't used to such a gesture from Brian; to hold her like this, and only hold her.

She had never given it any further thought before, because she liked what she had, but then, this new manner of his, caring and protecting, was something she could get used to. Their encounters were normally marked by fervent kisses and a lot of bed-time; it was the first time Lisbon experienced something like silent, loving company with him. Still, it didn't scare her as it would have in the past.

The world around them looked like it had been touched by Midas' hand. Bathed in the golden light of the sun and enwrapped in its warming rays, the pair stood on the balcony in a comfortable and somewhat intimate embrace that made every other guest immediately refrain from their planned visit on the balcony as soon as they saw the couple.

They stood like this for what felt like an eternity; an eternity in another world. She felt safe and secure like she hadn't felt in a very long time. She completely relaxed against him, felt his chest move with every of his breaths, felt the warmth of his body, felt the soft material of his clothing against her skin that was exposed by her low-backed dress.

Where there had been doubts now was only certainty - that was the man she wanted to be with. And she wanted to whole world to know it.

When she tried to turn around this time, he let her. She smiled when she slowly moved, her eyes taking in his elegant appearance before wandering up to meet his eyes. And find far too familiar blue orbs looking back at her.

Lisbon was shocked that the arms that had felt yet different, but still so right and familiar around her hadn't been the man's she had assumed. Instead, she had stood in the embrace of a man she had been secretly admiring for a long time, but in the end given up on.

And now here he was, Patrick Jane, the man she'd been working with for five years, who was her team's consultant and who had become, despite all problems and misunderstandings, maybe the closest to a best friend she had.

"Jane, what...?" she began, still confused, but was silenced by his finger that came to rest on her lips.

"Listen, Teresa," he whispered and she felt her stomach flutter when he said her name, "Listen."

A soft tune was carried from the celebration hall out to the balcony. She listened attentively, and soon was met by words that made her heart beat even faster than it already did by now.

*Who knows when love begins?
Who knows what makes it start?
One day it's simply there,
Alive inside your heart.*

While one of Jane's arms still held her, the other arm's hand came up to caress her face and brush back a dark lock that had fallen into her face. Lisbon was barely breathing by now. Every thought about Brian, every necessary attempt to free herself from Jane's embrace, and every other possible reason why this was wrong was forgotten; there was only them.

Teresa and Patrick.

*It slips into your thoughts,
It infiltrates your soul,
It takes you by surprise,
Then seizes full control.*

The hand that had been gently touching her face only a minute ago now sought out her hand. He gently enclosed her smaller one, his fingers playing with and caressing hers, before he lifted their hands and let them rest right above his heart.

Then he began to sway to the music; a slow movement, as soft and fine as the evening breeze.

*Try to deny it, and try to protest,
But love won't let you go,
Once you've been possessed.*

*Love never dies.
Love never falters.
Once it has spoken,
Love is yours.*

It was like the music was telling her story. *Their* story. Every single word felt like taken from their history, the book of her and, she was sure, also his feelings. Describing what had happened to them over the years. From boss and consultant to colleagues who respected each other; from colleagues to confidants in their professional life; from confidants to friends and then best friends who shared a deep bond no one really understood - maybe not even themselves.

And from best friends? Teresa didn't know. Or maybe she didn't want to be sure, to predict and assume. Maybe all she wanted was to believe that this was real. And possible.

Her head rested on his shoulder; just like she had done it so many years ago after their case that had revolved around a school reunion. Back then, they had played a song *she* used to love; now there was a song playing that told the story of *their* love.

Teresa doubted that the rate of her heartbeat was healthy, as she was sure that he wouldn't have needed to touch her to feel her tremble. Slowly, she lifted her head from his shoulder, and, taking a deep breath, again looked him into the eyes.

Hadn't his arms felt so right around her? So much more than Brian's, now that she knew that the man who was holding her in a way she had never known she longed for, but was so perfect and gentle as she now realized she needed it, wasn't the one she had been with the past four months? But that it was the man who always stood by her side when she needed him - and didn't need him? Hadn't he, despite all their hardships, despite all the problems he had caused her, remained and showed her that he was worth it? That they and their efforts were worth it?

And didn't his eyes just now show her how deeply and truly he loved her?

"Patrick," she breathed, "kiss me."

And he did.

END

The lyrics are from the title song of Andrew Lloyd Webber's new musical "Love Never Dies", the sequel to the famous "Phantom Of The Opera".