

Chapter 7

Sara walked into Grissom's office. He was sitting behind his desk again, scanning the case file.

"Find anything new?"

Grissom looked up from the file, and watched her sitting down in a chair in front of him. "No. There's nothing we've overlooked. We have to wait for Archie, see if he can find anything."

"Hmm." Sara nodded somewhat absentmindedly, and shifted her gaze from Grissom to his desk.

Taking off his glasses, Grissom regarded Sara for a while. "Is there anything else?"

"No. No, there isn't." She shifted her gaze somewhat nervously.

"Sara..."

"Look, shift has been over for two hours. Do you mind if I go home? I got some things to do."

"No, of course not. I was about to head out myself." He closed the file.

"Okay. Page me when Archie found anything, okay?" She moved to get up from the chair.

"Listen..." Grissom ran his index and middle finger over his lips, before focusing on Sara again. "Would you like to maybe grab some breakfast? Talk things over."

'What?' Sara looked somewhat dumbfounded. 'Did Grissom just ask me out for breakfast? What... Why now all of a sudden? Things? What is he talking about?'

"Sara?" Her quietness and surprised expression weren't exactly encouraging in Grissom's eyes.

"What?"

Grissom coughed. "Well, breakfast?" 'How eloquent, Gil.'

"I don't think so, Grissom. I..., I have some things to do." Sara got up from the chair. "See you tonight."

"Okay." He watched her walk out of his office, before sighing, and running a hand through his hair. 'What did you expect, Gil. You've waited too long.' He sighed again, before grabbing his jacket, and turning off the lights behind him.

Sara cursed under her breath. Pulling out of the parking lot, she caught a glimpse of Grissom as he slowly walked to his Tahoe. Was it just her, or did he seem a bit defeated?

'Damn!' He had done it. He had made a move, and she had pulled back. Or had he? 'Things. What does that mean now?' As typical for Grissom, he had said a lot without really saying anything. She could make of it what she wanted, and he could deny anything afterwards. Infuriating as hell.

Sara had arrived at a point, where she wouldn't just jump at his every word. Her decision had been made. The resignation papers were signed. But why hadn't she taken her resignation to work today? And why had Grissom to be so nice this night? As if he was making it harder for her on purpose. She sighed deeply.

Grissom's pager went off just as the end credits began to roll. He sighed, and proceeded to apologize to the few people who were sitting in his row as he got out.

Walking out of the cinema into the midday sun, he checked his pager. 'Lab. ASAP. Archie.'

That looked promising. He sent a quick page to Sara, rubbed his tired eyes, and took off for the lab. He had gotten home after the failed breakfast invitation, thinking to take it easy, relax a bit, but had found it impossible to quiet down enough to accomplish much of that. After reading a sentence for the third time, and still not being able to grasp the meaning, he'd tossed the novel on the coffee table, got dressed and left his townhouse. A movie had been just the right thing to take him away from everything else. A chance to get lost in something besides work or unwelcome thoughts and emotions.

Walking into the tech department, he spotted Archie sitting behind a desk full of computers, getting some printouts from one of the printers behind him. As he heard the steps, he turned around and looked at Grissom.

"Wow, that was fast."

Grissom shrugged. "I aim to please. Your page seemed urgent."

"Yes, I found something. The computer from that lady you interrogated?" He pointed to one of the pcs in various stages of completion. "I checked all recent log ins, especially all checking the medical files of the employees, as you told me. There are quite a lot of log ins."

"She said she was responsible for them." Grissom walked around the desk.

"Yes. But one file was called upon repeatedly. Thomas Newman, the victim."

Grissom looked over the printout. "Yes, we established a connection between these two, but nothing we could prove."

"That's not what I'm driving at." Archie pointed towards the bottom of the sheet. "I checked all those log ins. She wasn't the only one, who checked the files. See?" He pointed at a specific log in entry. "It looks like it was accessed via her computer, but the IP address doesn't match."

"Someone else logged in under her name?"

"Yes. I was able to get all IP addresses from the company, Brass talked to their IT department." He turned, and reached over to take another printout. "IP address matches one Steve Jenkins."

Grissom shifted his gaze to his left and thought for a moment. "Brass mentioned him. He is the manager. I'd say it's normal for him to have access to all files."

Archie nodded. "That's true, and I thought so too. But, why would he sign in under a different ID, trying to hide the fact that he checked the files." He grabbed yet another printout. "Plus, I checked his log ins, too. The only hospital records he ever called up were Thomas Newman's. No one elses."

Grissom nodded slowly. "Good work, Archie. Thank you." He took the printouts and walked to his office.

He sat down in his chair and picked up the phone. "Brass? I need you to do a background check on Steve Jenkins." He listened for a beat. "Yes, I know. Something came up. Okay. Call me when you get something." He put the receiver down and noticed Sara standing in the doorway.

"Sara, come in." He motioned towards one of the chairs.

"Hey Grissom." She sat. "I got your page."

"Yes. Sorry to disturb you so early, but there has been a new development."

"I heard you tell Brass to check a Steven Jenkins. He's the manager of the victim's workplace, right?"

"Um hm. Archie found that he'd accessed Newman's hospital files."

"Okay." Sara rubbed her arm slowly. "Think about calling for a warrant?"

Grissom shook his head. "I don't think we have probable cause for that. Not yet." He got up. "Let's check with tox and see if they're through with the samples from the supplements you brought in."

"You look tired Grissom." Sara slowly got up from the chair.

"What?"

"You look tired. Have you had the chance to catch any sleep?"

"I..., no, not yet. I was busy. Never mind me." He turned and left his office, leaving Sara standing behind.

She softly fingered the folded sheet of paper she had been holding, before putting it away into her purse, and following Grissom.

Greg wasn't in since it was officially dayshift now. Sara was glad she hadn't run into Ecklie, yet. She could stay somewhat calm around Grissom, but there was no telling what might happen if Ecklie crossed her way. She watched Grissom talking with the other lab tech. He shook his head, and pointed to something on the results. Grissom nodded slightly, thanked the tech and went back out into the hall to join Sara, who had just come back from the locker room.

"They ran the samples. Newman's bottle contained Ethylene Glycol."

Sara took the sheet of paper from him. "This is the same kind that Janice Newman had in her office."

"Yes, only her bottle wasn't poisoned."

"Maybe not yet." Sara grinned.

"You have an idea?" Grissom started to follow her down the hall towards the evidence storage.

"Well, somewhere in between Janice Cole's office and Newman's house, someone must have put the Ethylene Glycol in the supplements." She signed in, and walked towards the evidence vault, checking the various boxes containing old and new evidence. "I mean, a single dose of Ethylene Glycol wouldn't have killed him, right?"

"No." Grissom pulled out the right box for her. "Only a steady dosage over a medium period of time would have caused his body to succumb to the toxins to kill him."

Sara rooted through the box. "So, only someone who knew of his condition could have done it. He or she knew the symptoms could be mirrored, and knew just what supplements he used."

"Yes. But we can't prove Janice Cole knew about it. And only because Jenkins checked the med files, doesn't mean he knew of it. Newman was never diagnosed with NMS in these files. We don't have a direct link between either of them."

"Maybe not yet." Sara pulled out an evidence bag and held it in front of Grissom. "But I think we'll find our answer here."

Grissom looked at the bottle of food supplements from Newman's house. "Fingerprints."

"Exactly!" She looked at him before turning. "You really must be tired, Grissom."

TBC