

Author: sirageeks

Title: A light in the dark

Disclaimer: As always I do own nothing but my own weird thoughts.

A/N: Thanks to my beta reader KmNO4. You rock !!! Thanks for all the nice reviews, they really meant a lot to me.

All remaining mistakes are mine.

Chapter 1

Fourteen days earlier

The room was dark, and the only source of light was a small lamp on the nightstand. The walls, which had formerly been a shade of soft blue, were now covered with blood stains. The dim glow made them appear stark black against the paler backdrop, and a stale smell of copper lingered in the air.

It was entirely furnished in white.

A small wardrobe, two toy boxes, a tiny table with four equally miniature chairs and a little bed. On the west side of the room there was a huge window, which would have given the place a bright and airy atmosphere during the day. But, in the current midst of night it only cast shadows which combined with the other more sinister elements to create the effect of glimpsing the eerie scene of a horror film.

She carefully scanned the room with her Maglite, in an attempt to expose every possible little detail that could help them to identify the murderer. So far, all they had to go on were two hairs, some tan fibres and a button. Continuing to process for evidence, she suddenly heard a shrill scream coming from behind her, and a figure clad entirely in black began to advance.

Her heart was beating uncontrollably and she stood transfixed to the spot by fear, unable to make out a face in the darkness. The torch escaped her sweaty hands and she watched in slow motion as it fell to the floor, causing the glass to shatter into tiny fragments.

An arm reached out to grab her--

Sara awoke to hear the ringing telephone. Grissom reached over her, to pick up the receiver. She stretched herself awake, and tried to shake off the remnants of her nightmare. The cases were following her into dreamland.

This had been the one concerning the Hawkins girl, only eight years old and slaughtered by her teenage brother, who was sick of her getting all their parents attention. They had closed it over two weeks ago, and yet it still haunted her.

However, the threatening silhouette was a new element entirely.

A quick look at the clock showed Sara that it was barely midday, but Grissom would be picking their daughter up for lunch, so she would have to get up and prepare something for them to eat.

Spaghetti. It was Samantha's favourite food. The thought brought a small smile to Sara's face, thinking of what a nice treat it would be for her. But the grin quickly waned on hearing Gil's alarmed voice on the telephone.

"No. I haven't come to pick Sam up yet. I was just about to start getting ready to leave."

Sara sat bolt upright in bed as a chill began to creep over her.

"Where is she? What are you saying, Ms Parker?"

Grissom's expression was one of shock and disbelief.

"I'll be there in ten minutes."

Gil hung up and turned to Sara, his voice shaking with emotion.

"Sam didn't come back into class after recess. The office received a note saying we had a family emergency, and had to take her home. Her teacher wanted to know if things were okay."

She sat frozen for a moment, before scrabbling from the bed to pull on her clothes.

"Honey, what are you doing?" Grissom asked quietly.

"It has to be a misunderstanding. We'll go over there and sort it out," she replied, a frantic edge to her voice.

"You have to stay here. Someone might call. We can't both go, Sara," he reasoned.

She threw her shirt to the ground and turned towards him.

"I don't want to feel helpless, Gil. I want to do something. I'm frightened."

Grissom went over and drew her into a hug.

"I'm frightened too."

During the ride to Samantha's school Grissom fought to maintain a clear head.

Throughout his entire adult life he had successfully hidden behind a mask of absolute professionalism, which was often mistaken for outright coldness.

But, it had been slightly more penetrable since that rainy day at Berkeley when he had first formed a soft spot for a tall brunette with dark brown eyes and the most beautiful gap toothed smile he had ever seen.

Then, seventeen years later a new human being entered their lives and changed everything.

This tiny bundle, screaming for his attention, and laughing at him when he tickled her feet, taught him the most important lesson in his life; Love cannot be shrouded behind a facial façade. Even unspoken, it is the loudest sound of all.

Grissom reached his destination and got out of the car as fast as possible. He quickly crossed the deserted playground and headed towards the main entrance, overwhelmed with memories.

Parents held their children's hands as they scrambled up the front steps. Grissom and Sara were a part of the big adventure that was Samantha's first day at school.

Their little girl paused momentarily at the big glass doors.

"Come on, Sam. What are you waiting for?" Gil asked, kneeling beside her.

"Daddy, what if the other kids don't like me?" She began. "What if I'm too dumb?"

Grissom tenderly smoothed down her brown curls, and threw Sara a small grin.

"You're the most beautiful and intelligent girl in the whole wide world, Samantha! How could they not love you the way that we do?" He said softly.

"Are you sure?" she frowned.

"Positive!" her parents replied.

Just like that their daughter trusted them, and it was the sweetest burden to have secured such an innocent faith.

Grissom reached Ms Parker's classroom and his heart flipped on noticing that Samantha's was the only vacant desk. He took a deep breath and knocked. The teacher nodded in his direction and addressed her tiny students.

"I need you all to finish your drawings, while I go and have a little talk with Sam's daddy. I will be back in a few minutes, so don't make a sound while I'm away!"

She was soon outside in the empty corridor, shaking Gil's hand apologetically.

"I'm so sorry, Mr Grissom. We have all available staff searching the premise for Samantha, and I'm certain that this has to be some kind of terrible mix-up."

He nodded, not trusting his own voice as Ms Parker led him over to the office to retrieve the elusive note.

"It's so much like your handwriting. I was sure it was from you."

"That's okay. You couldn't have known better," Grissom said as his tone suddenly firmed.

He bent his head and began to read, his stomach tightening with every line.

Dear Ms Parker,

We had to pick Samantha up from School today, at an earlier time than previously anticipated.

This was due to an unexpected family emergency.

Sorry for any inconvenience caused...

Thank you for your understanding.

Gil Grissom

"Ms Parker, did you see who Sam left with?" he asked, dying slightly on the inside when the woman shook her head in an obviously negative response.

Grissom pulled out his cell and hit speed dial.

"Brass? I need you down here at Samantha's school. Call in the whole team. I don't want dayshift to hear about this."

There was a question on the other end of the line.

"I think she's been kidnapped. I know, Jim. I'll tell you more when you get here-- I have to speak to Sara."

TBC