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Title: On the road again

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A/N: I'm so sorry that it took me over six months to update this fic. In fact the chapter was written back in January but then RL came into my way. There are 101 reasons why everything took so long but I don't want to bore anyone. I promise the next update won't take so long!

I owe a 'huge' thank you to KmNO4 who beta-ed this chapter in her unique and wonderful style. Without her my muse and I would be lost!

Chapter 4: Diapers

Sara was abruptly woken by the sound of someone hammering at her door. She yawned and stretched herself out.

"Yeah?" She asked groggily.

"It's me, Grissom," he began, "can I come in?"

"Hang on a second."

Sara sleepily heaved herself out of the warm bed and simultaneously switched on the light on her nightstand. She opened the door with blurred eyes which took in one fully clothed supervisor, starring at her with his mouth agape.

It was then that she realized he was staring at her inadequate night shirt. Sara threw him a sheepish smile and turned around to quickly slip back beneath her blankets again.

"Come in, close that door and sit down," she demanded. "Now would you be so kind as to tell me why you have dared to wake me up at-"

A quick glance at her watch, and both eyebrows were raised sky high.

"Four o'clock in the morning! We're not on shift!"

Grissom entered and proceeded to complete her dictated tasks, stiffly seating himself at the end of her bed for want of an alternative seat.

"I'm sorry, Sara. But Henry Wood just called and he needs our help."

His fingers raked a trail through his uncombed hair, creating a ruffled yet sexy look.

"What could possibly be so important at this time of night? I was finally sleeping well for a change," Sara growled.

Grissom turned to look at her and fought to suppress a smile. Her head was barely visible over the top of her comforter, just a few chocolate wisps of hair.

"I understand, but I wouldn't have bothered you unless it was important. There were two students from LA who were supposed to be helping him set up the outdoor exercises, but their flights have been cancelled due to a heavy storm. The others won't get in until this evening and we are the only people coming by car. Henry is in dire need of assistance right now, or the whole thing will be ruined."

He sighed when she refused to reply or move out from under the covers.

"Sara, come on... please." Grissom whined in his best pleading voice.

"Well," she teased, "If you're brave, you can try and get me out of this cozy bed. Otherwise, no way!"

He shrugged and reached under the sheets until he found her right foot.

"Fine, if that's what it takes."

"You wouldn't dare!" Sara shrieked.

Grissom gave her a mischievous wink and started to tickle the object in question. This caused her squeal like a stuck piglet, and automatically lash out. He groaned in pain as her heel connected with his side.

"If you ever...", she started in a loud voice, but was interrupted by Grissom who placed a hand softly over her mouth.

"Do you want to wake up the entire hotel?" He gently questioned.

"Maybe," Sara grinned beneath his palm.

Grissom withdrew his hand and replaced it with a soft kiss on her lips, before she could even respond his mouth had traveled down to her neck. He seemed to want to cover every inch of her in kisses and his light touch sent shivers running down her spine.

Slowly he wandered upwards again, to begin gently nibbling on her earlobe. Sara let out an involuntary moan and their lips met. She wrapped her arms around him and allowed her hands to wander across the broad expanse of his back.

The kiss deepened and their tongues entwined in what seemed to be an endless dance. He teased the curves of her body, pausing only for a brief second to draw breath. She heard him uttering against her mouth.

"Sara, I want you."

Grissom stopped for a moment and held her gaze. Sara could see a desire burning in his eyes that was mirrored in her own. Purposefully she raised her head towards his and her silky hands began to unfasten the buttons of his shirt.

He fought to suppress a groan as her fingers caressed bare skin. Grissom reached out to draw Sara into a tender embrace, but just at that moment his cell phone began ringing.

"Leave it," she whimpered against his throat.

He sighed and apologetically answered it.

"Grissom."

A voice spoke on the other end.

"Henry, what can I do for you?" He tautly replied.

Sara smiled weakly at his exaggerated frown and mouthed that she would take a quick shower. Once under the safe trickle of hot water, she allowed her thoughts to wander, barely able to believe that just moments ago, she had almost slept with Gil Grissom.

Half an hour later they were on the road again. Sara sat quietly in the backseat, her eyes half closed and a steaming cup of coffee held tightly in her grasp.

"This Wood must be some character if he managed to convince you to bring him bagels! I thought he was too stressed to eat!" She moaned.

"Henry said that this bakery has the best bagels anywhere and you know how it is with old mentors Sara, they're irresistible."

She grinned at his loaded comment.

"Don't flatter yourself, Griss."

But Sara left the conversation there. She wasn't up to discussing their 'non' relationship in more than passing jest when there was less than five hours of sleep presently sustaining her.

Heavy black clouds overshadowed the sky and rain began to fall against the windscreen in steady thuds. Grissom cleared his throat and began to speak.

"I hope the weather improves by the time we reach Billings, or else this conference really is in big trouble."

"No outdoor exercises in a torrential downpour," Sara conceded.

"Exactly," he replied.

But as they reached the outskirts of town the sun began to shine brightly in spite of the freezing temperatures outside the car. They found the shop Wood had mentioned and purchased his beloved bagels, buying extra for themselves.

"These are good," she grinned, heading back towards the car.

"Sara, wait a minute. I have to go across the street and run one final errand," Grissom said sheepishly.

"What now?" She exclaimed.

"Diapers," he voiced quietly. "Henry has his 18-month-old grand-daughter with him and he hasn't found time to go out and get any."

Sara was speechless with bemusement, and almost fearful of meeting any man who could get Gil Grissom to purchase baby items of his own free will.

"Fine," she sighed. "I'll come with you."

"I don't think that's such a good idea, we wouldn't want people thinking they were for us. I mean an old guy and a beautiful young woman. I remember how uneasy Dorothy's comment made you..." he reasoned.

Sara felt her temperature rising.

"Are you ashamed to be seen with me?"

Grissom removed his glasses and wearily rubbed his eyes.

"That's not the case and you know it, Sara."

She took a deep breath and closed her eyes, fighting not to explode right here. His attitude hurt her, but this wasn't the place to deal with it. They were both too tired and cranky to think straight.

"Fine, go. I'll meet you back at the car."

Ten minutes later Grissom arrived and put the diapers into the trunk. An icy silence hung between them as he climbed into the driver seat and began to drive.

Sara hadn't expected the city to look so ordinary. Catherine had been raised on a ranch in Montana and she her comments implied that everywhere would probably be old and shabby, but that was proving to be far from true. Grissom pulled up in front a large hotel.

"I think it would be best if we checked in first. Then I'll head over to meet Henry at Montana State University. You can get some rest and check back with the team in Vegas. I'll call if we need you."

He got out of the car and opened the trunk. She did the same and reached for her own bag.

"Was that an order or a suggestion?" Sara asked in a decidedly cold voice.

"An order," Grissom returned curtly, holding the door open for her.

"As you wish, boss," she said, passing him and heading towards the reception desk without a backwards glance.

The hotel was larger than the others had been. Sara remembered that Grissom had told her that they had a special conference suite. Their seminar would contain a lot of practical exercises, but the theoretical part would be held here.

The foyer was spacious and bright. Tall windows filtered the sunlight and created a warm glow. It was still early and they were the only customers. The clerk, an earnest looking, young woman handed them the registration forms and they filled them out in silence.

Their rooms turned out to be adjoining ones on the eighth floor. Grissom paused at his door and turned to address Sara.

"Say hi to Catherine for me. I guess I'll probably see you this evening."

Before she could answer he opened the door and walked inside. Sara opened the door to her own room and headed straight for the bed. She let her bag fall in front of it, slipped out of her shoes and sank down onto the mattress.

She made herself comfortable and lay on her back, her hands folded across her stomach. Sara tried to calm herself down and to think rationally about her current situation. She just couldn't quite understand how a day that started off so wonderfully could have turned into such a hellish nightmare.

Sara knew by now that Grissom returned her feelings, that it wasn't a one sided crush. She inwardly winced at the thought of the word 'crush'. She was a woman in her thirties and not a smitten teenager, but there was no other way to describe it. Using the word love would be too dangerous.

But why did he react so harshly this morning? Could it really be that he was ashamed to be seen with her? Did it really matter so much what other people thought of them? Did he only want her while they were alone together? Would he reject her as soon as they were back in Vegas again?

Sara sighed and sat up. It wouldn't solve anything worrying about it right now. She grabbed the phone from the bedside table and called the lab.

"Hey, Sara. How do you like all that bare naked countryside?" Catherine joked.

"It's not so bad," Sara laughed.

"Give a day or two, you'll be climbing the walls," she sighed. "How's Grissom?"

"Fine, he says hello," Sara replied tersely.

There was a brief silence on the other end of the line.

"I hope you two are getting on okay. I thought this trip might be a good opportunity for you to settle your differences," Catherine said sincerely.

"Look, I didn't mean to snap at you. It's nothing really, we just had a little disagreement," she replied.

Normally Sara wouldn't have opened up to Catherine like this but she was still mad at Grissom, and it couldn't hurt to get a little of advice.

"Sara, he's the most complicated specimen of a man I know, but don't give up on him. Remember, arguments can help keep things fiery!"

They both laughed aloud at this.

"Thanks Cath, I'll bear that in mind. How are things going at the lab?"

"Everything's fine, in fact I have a meeting with Ecklie in five minutes so I have to run."

"Good luck!" Sara scoffed.

"You too," Catherine teased before saying her goodbyes.

Sara placed the phone back on its cradle and listened as Grissom's room door slammed shut. She guessed he was on his way out to see the infamous Henry Wood, which meant it was time for her mandatory nap. It couldn't hurt to give her body a little rest after all...

Sara drew the heavy curtains shut and stripped down to her underwear before crawling beneath the warm and fluffy sheets.

She woke up two hours later and let out a loud groan on remembering her location. For a few minutes Sara lay silently contemplating her options. Grissom hadn't called which meant she was free to do as she pleased.

Sara headed for the information desk after pulling on a warm sweater, jeans and a long scarf. She would see the sights and begrudgingly bring her cell phone along, incase Grissom decided to call.

By five o'clock a freezing but contented Sara Sidle returned to her hotel.

Montana wasn't as artificial as Vegas or as sunny as California, but it had a kind of rough beauty that appealed to her. She got the elevator up to her room and found her only companion to be a reserved man with rusty colored hair.

"Excuse me," Sara asked on noticing his baggage label. "Are you Horatio Caine from Miami?"

He seemed surprised but nodded.

"I think you might have met two of my colleagues awhile back, Catherine Willows and Warrick Brown. I'm Sara Sidle from the Vegas lab."

Horatio smiled at her, offering a strong yet warm handshake.

"I'm pleased to meet you, Miss Sidle. I was expecting to see your boss, Mr. Grissom. Did he send you instead?"

"No, we're both here. I'm the CSI and he's the entomology expert. What's your field of expertise, Mr.Caine?" She probed.

"Arson, I suppose, and please, call me Horatio," he said with a hint of interest lacing his voice.

"In that case, I'm just Sara," she grinned.

They both stepped out onto the eight floor.

"I don't suppose you'd like to join me for something to eat?" Horatio asked. "I'm starving."

Sara felt the intensity of his gaze, so cool and calm on the outside, *but what lay beyond that?*

"Sure, I'd love to," she said, pleased to be on the receiving end of so much positive male attention.

"I'm pleased to hear that. Shall we say we meet here again in about half an hour?" he suggested, pointing towards the elevator.

Sara nodded in agreement and they went to their separate rooms. Just as she was about to step into a warm shower, the phone began to ring. She wrapped a large towel around her and cursed beneath her breath.

"Sidle."

"Sara, it's me Grissom. I'm just calling to say that I won't be able to make it to dinner tonight. We're so busy that it will just be a quick meal at the university," he said simply.

"Fine, see you tomorrow," she sighed, and ended the call.

Sara went returned to her shower, determined to enjoy her evening with Horatio, if nothing else.

Grissom came back to the hotel at eleven o'clock. He was tired, and they had worked until late. It had been great to see Henry again, but Grissom's mind had been elsewhere the entire time.

He knew he had hurt Sara and that he had to make it up to her, avoidance was not going to work. It wasn't that he was ashamed to be seen with her, it was just that he wasn't ready to face the world with his feelings.

Grissom needed time to explore this new situation by himself, and to become comfortable with it. It had been a long time since he had shared his life with anyone and it was proving to be more difficult to readjust than he had anticipated.

He sighed and promised himself to talk to her in the morning; she would probably be in bed by now. The elevator stopped and Grissom got out. His heart skipped a beat when he saw that Sara's door was open. Throwing caution to the wind, he resolved to go and sort things out with her right there and then.

Until a tall red haired man paused in her doorway and said, "I'll be back in ten minutes."

Grissom felt breathless with surprise, Horatio nodded curtly as he passed him into the abandoned elevator.

Who the hell was this guy, and what was he doing with Sara in her room? Gil fumed.

TBC