

NCIS

".892 Miles"

Written by

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TEASER

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - NIGHT

Two cars speed down a relatively deserted road.

They weave in and out of the few cars.

Without slowing, they turn sharply onto an even more deserted side street, tires squealing.

Finally they reach a green stoplight before an overpass and come to a stop next to each other.

NICK and TIM, late teens, pop their heads out of their cars.

NICK

Ready for me to kick your ass?

TIM

Still a chance to back out before I
embarrass you.

They smile at each other and duck back into their cars.

Engines rev. The light changes to yellow, then red.

SQUEAL. Smoke spins from the tires, and then the cars are off, racing down the highway at blazing speed until

THUMP! THUMP!

Both cars hit something in the middle of the road and screech to a halt.

The boys climb out of their cars.

TIM

What the hell was that?

NICK

That was me kicking your ass.

Nick slaps the back of Tim's head. Tim shoves him playfully.

They start walking back down the road.

NICK (CONT'D)

Did you see how fast I was going
back there?

TIM
Whatever, man, that was nothing. I
creamed you.

NICK
You mean you creamed your pants
when you saw how fast I was going.

A form becomes visible on the road in the darkness ahead of
them.

TIM
Dude, that makes no sense.

NICK
Like hell it--

They come upon what they hit...

TIM
Holy mother of God.

...a young male in his early 20s.

ACT ONE

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM

Agents Tony DiNozzo and Tim McGee sit silently working at their desks.

Ziva David, a native-Israeli agent, carries a stack of paperwork back to her desk and sits.

Gibbs enters and marches toward them. He hits McGee's desk, startling him...

GIBBS
You parked in my spot, McGee.

...and continues walking.

MCGEE
We have spots?

DINOZZO
Gibbs does.

McGee winces.

Gibbs reaches the screen in the center of the office and turns it on: the smiling picture of an average-looking college-aged male.

GIBBS
We've got a body. Jonathan
Thompson. Twenty year-old
attending the Naval Academy.

Click. On screen: his mauled body.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
Run over in the street last
night...

Click. On screen: side by side pictures of Nick and Tim.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
...by these two boys: Nicholas
Ellingsworth, 17 and Timothy
Taylor, 16.

Ziva shakes her head in disgust.

ZIVA
What promising young men.

Click. On screen: side by side pictures of the two boys' cars.

GIBBS
Their street racing was interrupted when they hit him. Neither says they saw him beforehand, but both felt the thumps.

Click. On screen: side by side pictures of Nick and Tim.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
We need to figure out which one killed him.

MCGEE
Which one hit him first?

Gibbs glares at McGee.

GIBBS
Yes, McGee.

DINOZZO
Every time you speak, Probie, he's thinking about that parking spot.

MCGEE
You want me to move my car now, boss?

GIBBS
That would be good.

McGee gets up and scurries out of the office.

ZIVA
This is our case load?

DINOZZO
Yeah. Why are we getting this small-time stuff?

Click. On screen: picture of a middle-aged, highly-decorated navy man.

GIBBS

This is Admiral Robert Thompson.
Decorated with the Silver star,
recipient of the Congressional
Medal of Honor, the Navy Cross, the
Distinguished Service Award, the
Navy Commendation Medal and five
Purple Hearts, and superintendent
of the U.S. Naval Academy where his
son...

Click. On screen: side by side pictures of Admiral Thompson
and victim Jonathan Thompson.

GIBBS

...our victim, attended.

Gibbs heads to his desk.

ZIVA

(to DiNozzo)

Some snotty college boy gets into
trouble, and because his dad has a
big wig, we have to deal with it?

DINOZZO

It's "is a big wig."

Ziva scowls.

DiNozzo puts his hands behind his head and leans back in his
chair.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)

Don't sweat it. It's like getting a
day off without losing pay.

ZIVA

(raises an eyebrow)

You really think it will be that
easy?

DINOZZO

We've got the killer's picture
right up there.

DiNozzo picks up a remote. Click: side by side pictures of
Nick and Tim.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)

How hard can it be to figure out
which one of them hit him first?

McGee returns and walks over to Gibbs.

MCGEE
Hey, uh, boss, there's a 2006
Silver Prius blocking me in.

DiNozzo and Ziva rush to the window to take a peek.

GIBBS
And?

MCGEE
Well, I can't...

GIBBS
Just take care of it.

MCGEE
Uh, yes, sir.

McGee nods and leaves.

DINOZZO
Ha! Good luck getting out of that
one.

Ziva stifles a laugh.

ZIVA
Hey, Gibbs, don't you drive a 2006
Silver Prius?

GIBBS
Don't you have a suspect to
interrogate?

Ziva and DiNozzo shared an amused look.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM

DiNozzo and Ziva stare at the two suspects, who are in
separate interrogation rooms, through the window of the
center observation area.

ZIVA
Oh, mine's so guilty.

DINOZZO
I don't know. Mine looks like he
could get up some speed, if you
know what I mean.

ZIVA
 (raises an eyebrow)
 No, I don't. What are you saying?

DINOZZO
 Never mind. Just watch the master
 go to work.

He rubs his hands together and heads for an interrogation room.

Ziva rolls her eyes.

ZIVA
 We'll see who's the master.

They enter the separate interrogation rooms.

INTERCUT

INT. ZIVA'S INTERROGATION ROOM

Ziva sits across from Tim.

ZIVA
 So street racing, huh?

TIM
 (quietly)
 Yeah.

INT. DINOZZO'S INTERROGATION ROOM

DiNozzo sits across from Nick.

DINOZZO
 I used to street race back in the
 day.

Silence from Nick.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
 Oh, yeah, I was the king. You
 remind me a bit of me: handsome,
 smart, charming.

NICK
 (raises an eyebrow)
 Yeah, sure. Whatever.

DINOZZO
 Ah, I remember it well. Three
 hundred horsepower at 5750 rpm--

INT. ZIVA'S INTERROGATION ROOM

ZIVA
Mustang? That's a nice car.

Ziva reveals a slow smile.

TIM
Yeah.

ZIVA
Surprising that Nick's Cadillac
could take you out so easy.

TIM
What?

ZIVA
That's what Nick was telling me.

INT. DINOZZO'S INTERROGATION ROOM

DiNozzo throws up his hands.

DINOZZO
Hey, that's what Tim said.

NICK
Whatever.

DINOZZO
I didn't say it. I mean, I just
can't believe that a Mustang would
outgun a suped-up Cadillac.

INT. ZIVA'S INTERROGATION ROOM

TIM
What a liar! Listen, there's no way
his crappy Cadillac can take my
Mustang.

ZIVA
(raises an eyebrow)
Really? Way he tells it, your foot
just isn't lead enough.

TIM
Man, it was neck and neck when we
pulled out, but...

INT. DINOZZO INTERROGATION

NICK
 ...after we drove under that
 overpass, I pulled ahead...

INT. ZIVA'S INTERROGATION ROOM

TIM
 ...at least half a car length. Two
 hundred and eighty horsepower at
 6000 rpm. Do you have any idea how
 fast that can go? There was no
 way...

INT. DINOZZO INTERROGATION

NICK
 ...absolutely no way, that he was
 ahead of me. You know what my car
 can do.

END INTERCUT

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM

Triumphant, Ziva and DiNozzo exit their interrogation rooms
 into the center observation area where Gibbs waits for them.

DINOZZO
 What'd you think of that, boss?

GIBBS
 Congratulations. The first murder
 where I've got two suspects
 claiming responsibility for the
 crime within an hour of receiving
 the body.

DINOZZO
 What?! Your guy is lying.

ZIVA
My guy?

McGee pops his head in the room.

MCGEE
 Hey, Gibbs, you have a phone call.

INT. MTAC ROOM

Gibbs is expressionless as the image of Admiral Thompson
 berates him from the video screen.

THOMPSON
...to the full letter of the law. I
hope you understand that.

GIBBS
We're working on it right now, sir.

THOMPSON
Working on it? They already
admitted to running my son down.

GIBBS
They admitted to hitting his body,
not killing him.

THOMPSON
Well then, get them to admit it!
Isn't that what your staff is
supposed to be doing?

GIBBS
Sir, I understand you just lost
your son, but do not question my
staff. We're good at our job. Just
let us do it.

Gibbs shuts off the monitor and exits.

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM

Ziva and DiNozzo sit at their desks, frustrated and annoyed.

McGee approaches.

MCGEE
Hey, great job on the double
confession, guys. Think you can get
anyone else to admit to the crime?

Ziva stares daggers at him.

DINOZZO
That's hilarious. Say, did you move
your car yet, Probie?

MCGEE
Well--

DINOZZO
That's what I thought.

McGee gets flustered and goes back to his desk.

Gibbs stomps in holding a folder.

GIBBS
(to Ziva and DiNozzo)
I want you to dig up more on our
dead cadet.

He tosses the folder onto Ziva's desk.

ZIVA
Look, Gibbs--

GIBBS
Save it. Let's hope Ducky can make
up for it.

Gibbs pivots and walks away.

Ziva picks up the folder and looks at DiNozzo.

INT. NCIS AUTOPSY ROOM

Gibbs enters. He looks around, confused.

The room is empty except for the dead body on the autopsy
table, which still has the sheet pulled up.

GIBBS
Ducky?

The medical assistant, JIMMY PALMER, peeks his head out of an
interior office.

PALMER
Um, he hasn't arrived yet.

GIBBS
What do you mean he hasn't arrived
yet?

Palmer shifts his feet.

PALMER
Well, that he's not here.

Gibbs runs his hands through his hair in frustration.

GIBBS
I'll come back later.

Palmer sighs in relief as Gibbs turns to leave.

Just then, the doors to the autopsy room open, and DUCKY, the medical examiner, strides in pulling on gloves.

DUCKY
Sorry I'm late. Got your message.
I'm looking for which of the two
cars hit the body first, correct?

GIBBS
That's the short version, yeah.

Ducky pulls the sheet all the way back and briefly examines the body. He looks up at Gibbs.

DUCKY
You sure you have your information
right on this one?

GIBBS
Why?

DUCKY
Because this body was hit far more
than twice.

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM

McGee is at the window, flanked by Ziva and DiNozzo.

MCGEE
No one here seems to know who owns
that car.

ZIVA
Strange.

DINOZZO
Almost like someone was trying to
keep that information from you.

ZIVA
It does look that way.

McGee turns and looks at one, then the other.

MCGEE
You know, don't you? You know whose
car that is.

DINOZZO
I can't believe the lack of trust
I'm hearing.

MCGEE
It's your car!

DINOZZO
Yeah, right, like I would own a
Prius? Come on now, McGee.

Gibbs enters.

GIBBS
And what's wrong with a Prius?

DINOZZO
Uh, nothing, boss. Absolutely
nothing.

GIBBS
That's what I thought.

DiNozzo, Ziva and McGee rush back to their desks. Gibbs
follows.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
According to Ducky, the body was
hit at least a dozen times.

DiNozzo gives a low whistle.

MCGEE
So what now, boss?

GIBBS
We let the boys go.

ZIVA
What?

GIBBS
They didn't do this.

DINOZZO
Are you sure?

MCGEE
Who hits a body twelve times and
then calls the cops? Someone ran
him over in a rage and left him
there to be found by the two boys.

GIBBS
Exactly.

DiNozzo looks longingly at the screen still displaying the side-by-side photos of Nick and Tim.

DINOZZO

But are we sure one of them isn't the killer?

GIBBS

Biology class. The last known location before his death. McGee, get the class registry. DiNozzo, Ziva, I want you to interview each and every one of them.

Gibbs exits.

ZIVA

Looks like we're going to have to work for our paycheck after all.

DINOZZO

(sarcastic)
Great.

DiNozzo picks up his cell phone.

MCGEE

What?

DINOZZO

I had a smoking hottie coming down for lunch.

He starts dialing.

ZIVA

Ugh, I hate smokers. Such a disgusting habit.

DiNozzo waits as it rings.

DINOZZO

Not that kind of smoking, Ziva.

McGee laughs.

ZIVA

(glaring)
Have you moved your car yet, McGee?

DINOZZO

Yeah, better hurry and figure out who's blocking you in.

MCGEE

You know what, this is ridiculous.
I don't need to know whose car it
is. I can get my car out of the
spot anyway.

DiNozzo looks up, piqued.

We hear someone pick up the phone on the other end.

SULTRY FEMALE VOICE

Hello.

But DiNozzo is no longer paying attention...

SULTRY FEMALE VOICE (CONT'D)

Hello?

...and shuts the phone.

DINOZZO

(to McGee)

Oh, really? Wanna bet?

ZIVA

Oh, this is ridiculous.

DINOZZO

Two hundred dollars.

ZIVA

Don't do this, McGee.

MCGEE

No. No, I can do it. You're on.

EXT. NCIS HEADQUARTERS

DiNozzo, Ziva and several other AGENTS are outside
surrounding McGee's car.

He's parked at the end of the row, with the building on his
right side. Behind him, blocking in not only McGee's car but
also two others, is Gibbs' Prius. It is only barely blocking
McGee in, and if he backs out at just the right angle...

DINOZZO

Oh, I'm dying to see this. Anyone
have popcorn?

ZIVA

He's going to end up banging Gibbs'
car.

DINOZZO
Now, Ziva, he's not that desperate.

McGee climbs into his car.

MCGEE
(to himself)
This is gonna be a piece of cake.
There's plenty of room... Plenty of
room...

The engine starts. Ever so slowly, the car begins backing up.

ZIVA
(directing McGee)
A little to the left. Now right.
There you go. A little more.

DINOZZO
Hey! That wasn't part of the bet.

Ziva stops and holds up her hands in surrender.

The car continues to glide slowly by Gibbs' car. It stops suddenly.

DINOZZO
Giving up, McGee?

McGee pops his head out of the passenger side and folds the side view mirror in.

He pulls his head back in. The car begins moving again.

ZIVA
I guess not.

The car continues to inch slowly past Gibb's car until...

SCREEEEEEEEK. The side of the car scrapes against the building...

DINOZZO
(laughing)
Oh, oh, oh, what was that?

...but McGee successfully exits the parking space.

McGee scrambles out of his car. The entire lower right side is scraped from where it hit the building.

DiNozzo stands back and admires, holding in laughter.

MCGEE
(attempting composure)
Pay up, Tony.

DINOZZO
Hey, when you're beat, you're beat.

DiNozzo pulls out his wallet and hands McGee a wad of cash.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
Now don't go spending it all in one
auto shop.

INT. NCIS ABBY'S LAB

Gibbs enters with a small bottle of cola and places it in front of Abby.

ABBY
(offended)
What is this, Gibbs?

GIBBS
Read the label.

Abby looks at him skeptically but picks it up. Her eyes light up.

ABBY
Coke effervescence with coffee
essence. The new Coke Blak! The
ultimate caffeinated beverage!

Abby jumps up and throws her arms around Gibbs.

ABBY (CONT'D)
It's not s
et to release for another three
weeks. Gibbs, where did you get
this?

GIBBS
I have my sources.

ABBY
And to think at first I thought you
had neglected my caffeine fix.

GIBBS
Never. Now I need to know anything
you can tell me about the car that
hit this body before the boys got
to it.

He drops a folder on the table.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
Here's the information on their
vehicles and tires.

ABBY
Great! I'll get right on it.

She turns to her Coke Blak and looks at it like a zealot does her idol.

GIBBS
Don't make me regret bringing that
to you. I need this information
pronto.

She snaps out of it.

ABBY
Of course, Gibbs. Of course.

She walks back to her lab table and fiddles on the computer until he exits the room.

Then she runs to her Coke Blak, slowly opens the cap, closes her eyes, and breathes in the sweet scent.

INT. NAVAL ACADEMY DORM HALLWAY

DiNozzo and Ziva stand outside an open door looking into a room. A CADET stands there.

CADET
Anything else you need to know?

DINOZZO
No, we're done here.

The Cadet closes his door. Ziva and DiNozzo walk away.

ZIVA
Well, this has been helpful.

DINOZZO
Yeah, just how I wanted to spend my
day.

EXT. DORMITORY LAWN

Ziva and DiNozzo exit and walk away from the building.

ZIVA

What was that, the eighth kid who said, "Jonathan who?" Your father's the superintendent of the academy and no one knows you. How does that happen?

DINOZZO

Ah, come on, we got a wealth of information about him. And everyone agrees:

He holds up his notes and reads.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)

"Pampered, snobby, a loner."

ZIVA

Are we really supposed to believe he didn't have any friends?

DINOZZO

Look, every kid has said the same thing so far. Do you think the two of us should waste our afternoon listening to twenty more kids repeating what we've already heard?

ZIVA

(pause)
You know, you're right.

DINOZZO

(relieved)
Thank you.

Ziva pulls out her phone and dials.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

She holds up a finger.

ZIVA

Yeah, Gibbs? It seems like a dead end here so far. I'm heading back to the office, and DiNozzo has graciously volunteered to stay and interview the remaining classmates.

(pause)
Great.

She hangs up the phone. DiNozzo glares.

DINOZZO

When you least expect it. Mark my
words.

ZIVA

Enjoy your afternoon.

Ziva saunters off, leaving behind a fuming DiNozzo.

ACT TWO

INT. DORM HALLWAY - MORNING

McGee, Ziva and DiNozzo walk down the hallway.

ZIVA
Hey, how'd the rest of those
interviews go yesterday?

DiNozzo glares.

MCGEE
Thirty-two. This is it.

DiNozzo knocks on the door and stands back.

FRED, a tall, buff blonde, groggily opens the door.

FRED
Can I help you?

Ziva holds out her badge.

ZIVA
NCIS. Can we come in?

The agents step into the room.

INT. DORM ROOM

The room is clearly divided into two halves: two beds, two desks, two dressers.

The right side is immaculate. Piles of notebooks and folders are organized on top of the desk. Shelves filled with books are above it. The bed is made, and on top of the dresser, there is nothing but a large, ornate blue box.

The left side is a mess. There are a few book strewn on the desk, along with two empty bottles of beer and several bottle caps. The dresser is covered with dirty laundry, and in the corner, there are several weights.

FRED
Uh, sure. Am I in trouble for
something?

DINOZZO
We're not sure yet.

ZIVA
We're here about Jonathan.

FRED
What about him?

DINOZZO
He's dead.

FRED
Huh.

Fred plops onto his unmade bed.

McGee goes through the drawers in the other half of the room.

ZIVA
"Huh"?

FRED
Well, I can't pretend I'm sad. I didn't want the guy to die, but I barely knew him.

ZIVA
He's your roommate. How can you barely know him?

FRED
I'm not around much, unless I'm sleeping, and most of the time, he's got his nose in a book.

DINOZZO
And when he didn't come home last night?

FRED
Man, I was just glad I got to take his parking spot. Thought maybe he was finally getting some action, you know?

Ziva is not amused.

ZIVA
When was the last time you saw him?

Fred thinks a moment.

FRED
Early afternoon yesterday.

ZIVA
And what was he doing?

FRED

Waking up. Last few weeks, he's been getting up later and later. Yesterday was one of those days. He got up, got dressed, grabbed some stuff and left.

ZIVA

What stuff?

Fred points at the blue box.

FRED

Papers from that box there.

McGee picks the blue box up from atop the dresser and tries to open it.

MCGEE

It's locked.

DINOZZO

What does he keep in there?

FRED

I have no clue. He's real secretive about it. To be honest, I never cared enough to ask.

McGee grabs a paperclip and attempts to open the lock with it.

ZIVA

Any idea where he went?

FRED

Not really. I guess I always figure he's heading to class or to see his father.

DINOZZO

Why his father?

FRED

The only person I've ever really seen him speak to. He's constantly following him around campus.

McGee pounds the box on the desk. Everyone looks up at him.

MCGEE

Sorry. Trying to loosen the lock.

He goes back to fiddling with the box.

ZIVA

He follows his dad around campus?

FRED

No. Other way around. His father's always shadowing him. It's a real pain in my ass.

(motions toward his desk)

They frown on partying in the academy.

McGee gives up and puts the box in a plastic bag. He opens the bottom drawer of the dresser, pulls out one notebook, then another.

MCGEE

Hey, guys, check this out.

McGee hands both agents a notebook.

DINOZZO

"My cave is just deep enough for one/Just tall enough for me to stand/Just wide enough for me to lay either direction /I sit upon a single ledge /Head in hands/ Looking out at the world through the frame of my cool grey-blue cave." What is this crap?

ZIVA

Poetry.

MCGEE

Seems like the whole drawer is full of it.

DINOZZO

Ugh. Why?

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM

DiNozzo and Ziva sit at their desks staring at their computers.

McGee enters.

ZIVA

So what did Abby find in the box?

MCGEE
Mostly more poetry.

DINOZZO
I hope we're not expected to read
it.

MCGEE
And this.

McGee goes over to his desk and brings up an elaborate blue
and white conch graphic on his computer screen.

MCGEE
I had Abby scan it for me.

ZIVA
An insignia of some sort.

DiNozzo and Ziva lean toward the computer screen.

MCGEE
I'm running a search in all local
databases to see if I can find a
match. So far nothing.

ZIVA
Anything in the poetry?

MCGEE
I've been going through it. Tragic
stuff, but so far nothing
useful...or good.

ZIVA
Do you have a printout of that
insignia?

MCGEE
Several. Here.

He hands them to her.

Ziva hands one to DiNozzo.

ZIVA
Let's see if we can't get a
professor or student to identify
what this is.

DINOZZO
(moping)
Back to campus again?

ZIVA
No. We live in the 21st century,
Tony.

She walks over to the fax machine.

ZIVA (CONT'D)
Fax and a telephone.

INT. NCIS MTAC ROOM

Gibbs looks at Thompson on the video phone screen.

GIBBS
Thank you for taking some time off
for me, Admiral.

THOMPSON
What do you need?

GIBBS
I just want to ask you a few
questions about your son.

THOMPSON
Let's have it then.

GIBBS
Had you noticed a change in your
son's behavior in recent weeks?

THOMPSON
No.

GIBBS
Has he had any kind of schedule
change? Additional work maybe?

THOMPSON
Well, it is finals, but other than
that, no. Just the Navy and rest.
That's been his life since he was a
boy.

GIBBS
Nothing out of the ordinary?

THOMPSON
I told you, no.

GIBBS
And lastly, sir, where were you on
the night of your son's death?

THOMPSON

Excuse me? Do you know who I am?

GIBBS

Yes, I do, sir, which is why I'm letting you answer this question from the comfort of your office and not cooped up in one of our interrogation rooms.

THOMPSON

(glaring)

At home. Asleep.

GIBBS

Anyone who can confirm that?

THOMPSON

I sleep alone. My wife died twenty years ago.

GIBBS

I'm sorry to hear that. Are there any other family members we should be speaking to?

THOMPSON

No.

GIBBS

Okay. Thank you for your time.

THOMPSON

That's it? You better have more than this after a day and a half! Some ridiculous questions insinuating that I may be a suspect? What kind of an investigation team is this?

GIBBS

The best.

Click. Gibbs shuts down the monitor as the admiral continues barking.

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM

McGee is hard at work on his computer.

Ziva and DiNozzo are both on the phone.

ZIVA
It doesn't look familiar at all?

DINOZZO
Are you sure you've never seen it
before?

Gibbs marches in and pounds on DiNozzo's desk.

GIBBS
What kind of investigation team is
this? I want answers. Now.

ZIVA
(into phone)
Thank you for your time.

DINOZZO
(into phone)
Thanks.

DiNozzo and Ziva hang up.

MCGEE
(frantically typing)
We're working on it, boss. See, we
found this insignia. Here-- Wait,
I'll bring it-- Just give me a min--
I've got it right here.

ZIVA
We've been making calls all
morning.

DINOZZO
So far, no one knows a thing.

GIBBS
I thought this was going to be
easy. A walk in the park, DiNozzo,
and this is all you have for me?

DINOZZO
(flustered)
Well, that was when we had two
suspects. Now we have--

ZIVA
An academy full. No one liked this
guy, Gibbs.

GIBBS
I don't care who liked him! I just
need to know who had a reason to
kill him.

MCGEE
Here. Here it is.

The insignia pops up on his screen.

MCGEE (CONT'D)
(proud)
What I've been doing is running a
cross-referential search with the
main data and--

GIBBS
Tritons.

ZIVA/DINOZZO/MCGEE
Huh?

GIBBS
It's the Brotherhood of the
Tritons, an unofficial fraternity
at the academy.

DINOZZO
Like a secret society?

GIBBS
If it was secret, would I be
telling you about it?

MCGEE
Wait! I remember something about
tritons.

McGee rummages through the notebook on his desk.

MCGEE
Here! "Tritons of the sea/Are all
around drowning me"

ZIVA
It would make sense. They all
resent him for his connection to
his father. Maybe a hazing ritual
gone awry.

DINOZZO

But how do we find them? They may not be a secret, but no one seems to know anything about them.

GIBBS

Well, they're not exactly a public organization either. I'll see what I can do.

Gibbs picks up the phone and dials.

GIBBS (CONT'D)

Hey, Johnny, how's it going?

(pause)

Yeah, it's been a while. Hey, I was wondering if you could do me a favor. The Tritons, are they still Third Floor Normandy?

(pause)

I know. I know. But it's for an investigation.

(pause)

Thanks. I really appreciate it. I'll make sure to keep it quiet. We'll have to catch up sometime. Grab a beer. Go dancing.

(loud laughter)

No kidding. Just like old times. Catch you around.

He hangs up. The agents are flabbergasted: Gibbs has a friend?

GIBBS (CONT'D)

Third floor, Normandy hall. Go, go, go! Find our guy. Interview them all if you have to.

EXT. NORMANDY HALL

Ziva and DiNozzo walk to the door. DiNozzo knocks.

FRAT GUY (O.S.)

What's the password?

ZIVA

NCIS. Open the door.

Fevered whispering ensues behind the door, followed by banging and clattering.

Ziva and DiNozzo wait impatiently.

DINOZZO
A password? I should knock down the
door on principle.

The door opens and BRIGGIN, an average-looking midshipman,
stands at attention and salutes them in his civilian clothes.

BRIGGIN
Midshipman Marcus Briggin, sirs.
(he sees Ziva)
Ma'am.

Ziva and DiNozzo look at each other and stifle grins.

INT. NORMANDY HALL

Briggin hands a list of names to DiNozzo. Around the room, a
dozen other FRAT BOYS wait uncomfortably.

DINOZZO
(nodding)
Great, only twelve of you. Quite a
fraternity you got here. This
shouldn't take too long.

ZIVA
We'll need to interview everyone in
the club separately, so if you
wouldn't mind coming in one at a
time...

BRIGGIN
Absolutely, ma'am.

Ziva and DiNozzo take off their coats and sit down. Briggin
continues to stand there.

BRIGGIN (CONT'D)
Excuse me, ma'am, but does that
mean you need me to call everyone
else to come in?

ZIVA
What do you mean?

BRIGGIN
The rest of the fraternity.
Everyone else is on the way back
from class.

DiNozzo leans forward.

DINOZZO
And just how many of you are there?

BRIGGIN
Sir, a hundred and thirty-seven,
sir.

DiNozzo and Ziva look at each other.

ZIVA
Let's split up. I can do more guys
that way.

DINOZZO
I bet you can.

ZIVA
You know what I meant.

DINOZZO
Let's do it.

ZIVA
What?

DINOZZO
Let's see who can interview the
most.

A spark glints in Ziva's eye. She smiles.

ZIVA
You're on. I'll call you when I'm
done.

DINOZZO
Oh, I think I'll be the one calling
you.

INT. MESSY ROOM

A SLOB sits in a chair.

DiNozzo removes a few dirty T-shirts and a bra from the
chair. He holds up the bra.

DINOZZO
First time?

SLOB
Huh?

DINOZZO
Never mind.

He takes a seat in the chair.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
So tell me what you remember about
Jonathan Thompson.

SLOB
Who?

DiNozzo sighs.

INT. STONER'S ROOM

Poster of Bob Marley on the wall.

STONER
...and I was like, man, we are so
gonna get caught. I mean, there's
campus security here. Plus, who
knows what goes on in those
fountains after hours, but the guys
were like, dude, it'll be fun, and
I'm like, well, I guess it could
be. So we're all there at the
fountain about to--

ZIVA
I'm sorry. What does this have to
do with Jonathan?

STONER
Who? Oh, yeah, I'm getting to it.
So we're in the fountain...

Ziva looks exasperated.

INT. PATRIOTIC ROOM

A giant American flag and various guns cover the walls.

UPTIGHT CADET sits at attention.

DINOZZO
Do you know Jonathan Thompson?

UPTIGHT CADET
(barks)
Sir, no, sir.

DINOZZO
Relax, cadet, you can be at ease.

UPTIGHT CADET
Sir, I am at ease, sir.

DINOZZO
Okay then...

INT. CLEAN ROOM

Ziva taps her pen impatiently.

NERD scans the ceiling, deep in thought. He closes his eyes.

ZIVA
Yes?

He holds up a finger: I'm still thinking. Finally, he opens his eyes, resolute.

NERD
No. I do not remember.

INT. COMMON ROOM

DiNozzo enters and finds two frat boys, FREDRICKSON and ROBERTS, chatting.

DINOZZO
Cadet Fredrickson?

FREDRICKSON
Yes?

DINOZZO
NCIS. I'd like to ask you a few questions.

FREDRICKSON
Um, okay.

Roberts gets up.

ROBERTS
Well, I guess I better...

He goes to the door. DiNozzo puts up a hand to stop him.

DINOZZO
Wait!

A sly smile spreads across DiNozzo's face.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
You're a Triton, right?

ROBERTS
Uh, yeah.

DINOZZO
Have a seat.

Roberts sits.

DINOZZO
Jonathan Thompson.

DiNozzo holds a photograph of Jonathan in front of Roberts.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
Know him?

ROBERTS
Nope.

DiNozzo points it in Fredrickson's direction.

FREDRICKSON
Yeah.
(turns to Roberts)
Dude, you know him.

ROBERTS
I do?

FREDRICKSON
We spent, like, five hours chucking
eggs at his face.

ROBERTS
Oh. Which one of them is he?

He grabs the photo from DiNozzo and looks at it quizzically.

FREDRICKSON
He's the one we smashed into the
wall, remember?

ROBERTS
Oh, that spoiled son of a bitch.
Yeah. Yeah, I know him.

He hands the photo back.

ROBERTS (CONT'D)
Just didn't recognize him without
yolk on his face.

INT. FRAT HOUSE HALLWAY

DiNozzo's phone rings as he leaves the common room. He
answers without looking at it.

DINOZZO
Sixty-three. Beat that, Ziva.

INT. NCIS HALLWAY

Gibbs walks down a hallway. He furrows his brow and speaks
into the phone.

GIBBS
If I knew what you were talking
about, maybe I would.

INT. FRAT HOUSE HALLWAY

DiNozzo almost drops the phone.

DINOZZO
Oh, Gibbs, hey. Hi. Uh, what's up?

INT. ABBY'S LAB

Gibbs enters. Abby is at the computer.

GIBBS
What's up is that you and Ziva seem
to be playing games instead of
doing your job. Finish up and get
back here. Abby has news.

Gibbs hangs up. Abby turns to him.

GIBBS
What do you have for me?

ABBY
Oh, Gibbs, it was awesome. Amazing
stuff. Felt like my head was gonna
pop off. I can't wait until they
have it in soda fountains. Can you
imagine a forty-two ounce cup of
that stuff?

GIBBS
 (impatient)
 Abby.

ABBY
 Oh, sorry.

Abby turns back to her lab table.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 Well, I was able to isolate the boys' tires from the list of impacts, and I know you wanted me to get all the information on the car that hit the body before that, but...

GIBBS
 But? I'm not liking the sound of this, Abby.

ABBY
 Well, Gibbs, it turns out that it wasn't one car.

GIBBS
 Wasn't one car?!

ABBY
 No, it was several. At least seven. Possibly more.

GIBBS
 Find out exactly how many.

Gibbs starts for the door, then turns.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
 I'm glad you liked it.

ABBY
 (beaming)
Loved it.

Gibbs exits.

EXT. NORMANDY HALL

DiNozzo and Ziva exit the building.

DINOZZO
 So what are we thinking now that it's seven cars? Fraternity hazing?

ZIVA
Sounds that way to me.

DINOZZO
Any suspects?

ZIVA
Everyone. No one. You?

DiNozzo shakes his head.

ZIVA (CONT'D)
(sarcastic)
Good day.

DiNozzo holds his hand up to stop her.

DINOZZO
It's about to get better.

DiNozzo points up ahead; the first suspects, Nick and Tom, are walking toward the frat house from the parking lot.

Tom's eyes widen.

TOM
Nick!

He pulls at Nick's shirt and runs. Nick looks up, spots the agents, and follows after him.

Ziva turns to DiNozzo.

ZIVA
Better, huh?

DiNozzo glares at her and they both race after the boys.

ACT THREE

EXT. PARKING LOT

Nick and Tom jump into their car Dukes of Hazzard-style and peel out.

Ziva and DiNozzo both run for the driver's side, but Ziva gets there first. DiNozzo groans but jumps into the passenger seat. He just manages to slam the door as Ziva floors it.

EXT. BUSY STREET

A chase ensues. Both cars weave in and out of traffic.

Finally they get to a part of the street with few cars, but Ziva stays behind the teens.

INT. NCIS CAR

DINOZZO

You might not know this, but if you push down on the gas pedal, we'll go faster. If we go faster, we might actually be able to get ahead and stop them.

ZIVA

Not trying to get ahead of them.

DINOZZO

Then what are you doing?!

EXT. STREET

Ziva aims the NCIS car at the left side of the teens' rear bumper. She rams it and immediately brakes as the other car spins to a stop.

ZIVA

That.

DiNozzo jumps out and pulls his gun.

DINOZZO

Freeze!

Ziva strolls past him to the teens' car and pulls open the door. Nick falls out of the driver's side and slumps to the ground.

TOM
 (shaking)
 What the hell just happened?

INT. ABBY'S LAB

Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" blares.

Abby is at her computer head-banging, hair flying. She waits for a printout and air guitars her way over to McGee who is also rocking out.

Awkwardly but passionately, his head and body bounce to the beat as he takes the paper to another console and enters it in the system.

Abby types on a keyboard as McGee makes his way back to her. She lip syncs on an imaginary microphone, which she hands off to McGee, who reluctantly accepts it.

McGee begins to lip sync. Seeing his reluctance, Abby joins in, and he grows more confident in the act.

As the two lean over their imaginary mic all-out screaming "OOOOOH" to the lyrics, the music stops. Their singing doesn't.

ABBY/MCGEE
 ...oooooh--!

GIBBS
 What the hell is going on in here?

McGee jumps and drops the mic.

Abby smiles at Gibbs.

ABBY
 Cross-referential data comparisons
 to Queen.

GIBBS
 No. I mean, what's he doing here?

ABBY
 It's more cars than we thought,
 Gibbs. I asked him to help.

GIBBS
 Help?

MCGEE
(still composing himself)
Entering, uh, the results in the
post-reference system, boss.

ABBY
At least twenty-five separate cars
so far. We've only been able to
identify the make and model of
three.

GIBBS
Ducky know the cause of death?

ABBY
Not yet.

GIBBS
Well, keep going.
(to McGee)
Don't distract her.

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM - LATER

Thompson marches into the NCIS Squad Room, where McGee is
exiting the elevator.

THOMPSON
Do you have them here?

McGee looks up, confused.

THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Are they here?

MCGEE
I'm sorry, sir, I--

THOMPSON
You should be sorry! Letting them
go in the first place. It's
unacceptable.

MCGEE
You mean the Triton boys?

THOMPSON
What did you say?

Thompson grabs him by the shirt.

MCGEE

I'm not sure, but I am certain that
if we--

THOMPSON

Certain?! What exactly are you
certain of? I'd love to hear it!

MCGEE

Sir, I, uh, I am sure, uh, that--
Can I maybe find--

Gibbs enters.

GIBBS

General Thompson, hello. You heard
about the boys, I gather.

Thompson lets go of McGee.

THOMPSON

Of course I did! Do you think
anything goes on at my school that
I don't get wind of? Where--

Gibbs walks to him and gestures for him to follow.

GIBBS

They are both being interrogated by
my best agents. We will call you as
soon as we know something.

THOMPSON

No one seems to know much of
anything around here.

GIBBS

Phil. George. If you could help
General Thompson outside.

Without Thompson realizing it, Gibbs has guided him to the
door. Two SECURITY OFFICERS approach the General.

THOMPSON

Outside?

GIBBS

As I said, we'll call you when we
know something.

Phil and George reach for Thompson's arms. He shrugs them
off.

THOMPSON
I'm wasting my time here anyway.

He turns and leaves.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

DiNozzo and Ziva storm into the interrogation room where Nick and Tom are sitting.

DiNozzo slams his hands down on the table. The boys jump, and Nick blurts out:

NICK
We didn't know!

ZIVA
You didn't know? You expect us to believe that?

TOM
You have to believe us. We had no idea.

ZIVA
One of the most hated students on campus, and you didn't recognize him?

NICK
We're not students there. We go to high school.

DINOZZO
But you were still at the frat.

NICK
My brother's a member.

TIM
I think I met Jonathan once. Ever.

ZIVA
If you're so innocent, why'd you run?

NICK
You'd run, too, if you just found out the body you ran over was some dude who belonged to the fraternity you chill at.

TIM
 But we didn't kill him. We didn't.
 (bursts into tears)
 Or if we did, he was just lying
 there. Just lying there.

DiNozzo and Ziva exchange looks.

INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

DINOZZO
 Well, that went well.

He plops into his desk chair.

MCGEE
 (hopeful)
 Really?

ZIVA
 No, they're just two scared little
 boys. We got nothing. You and Abby
 find anything?

MCGEE
 Not much. Her total is up to twenty-
 five cars at this point. And we
 just got a call from the police.
 They found Jonathan's SUV.

ZIVA
 Twenty-five cars?

MCGEE
 Yeah. Twenty-five separate cars
 that hit the body.

DINOZZO
 They really didn't like this kid,
 did they?

ZIVA
 It's gotta be something at the
 fraternity.

DINOZZO
 Maybe they just watched "The
 Program" and got a little carried
 away.

ZIVA
 Which program?

DINOZZO
The movie called "The Program".

ZIVA
I know it's hard for you to believe, Tony, but the world does not revolve around movies.

DINOZZO
Ah, but it should.

ZIVA
Fine, I'll bite you. What is the movie about?

DINOZZO
Bite me, Ziva, bite me.

Ziva glares.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
Football players playing chicken by lying down on a busy highway.

ZIVA
This highway wasn't that busy.

DINOZZO
Maybe the frat boys helped make it busy.

ZIVA
This is your theory?

DINOZZO
This is my theory. Got a better one?

ZIVA
Maybe the boys did kill him. Jealousy. It could be that simple.

DINOZZO
Why would these high school kids be jealous of him?

ZIVA
Your theory is more plausible? Why would a grown man lay down in the middle of a highway?

DINOZZO
Well, if you saw "The Program,"
you'd know why.

Gibbs strides through the office toward the exit, putting on his jacket as he walks.

GIBBS
Ziva, DiNozzo, McGee, cut the gab
and grab your coats. We're going to
the Triton house.

MCGEE
What's going on, boss?

ZIVA
We get a confession from one of
them?

Gibbs reaches the exit and turns back to them.

GIBBS
What we've got is a five-star
admiral gone berserk.
(turns to McGee)
You shouldn't have let him leave,
McGee.

Gibbs turns and leaves. McGee's mouth drops.

MCGEE
I-- But--

DiNozzo, Ziva and McGee struggle to catch up to Gibbs.

DINOZZO
That's funny, no one at the Academy
knew anything about the Tritons
this morning.

GIBBS
(shouting back)
Apparently Thompson knew enough to
find them.

EXT. NORMANDY HALL

ANGLE ON scared FRAT BOY 1's face.

FRAT BOY 1
You want me to what?

ANGLE ON Thompson's blood-red face.

THOMPSON
(veins popping)
I want you to be a soldier and
follow an order! Let go!

ANGLE ON

Fredrickson's panicked, upside-down face. Sweat trickles up his forehead.

FREDRICKSON
No, man, no. You can't.

PAN OUT to reveal Fredrickson being dangled over the balcony by six FRAT BOYS.

Several other Tritons stand frozen, both on the stairs leading up to the balcony and on the lawn below.

Thompson paces the balcony.

THOMPSON
I just want answers, boys. I always
say the only way to get results is
to apply pressure.

Pause. The Frat Boys look at each other, confused and scared, but no one says anything. Thompson sneers.

THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Some of us need to be pushed into
remembering our obligations.

Thompson looks up at Frat Boy 1.

THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Are you a soldier or not?

Frat Boy 1 looks down at Fredrickson, who shakes his head frantically.

FRAT BOY 1
Sir, yes, sir.

Frat Boy 1 lets go of Fredrickson. The five remaining Frat Boys strain momentarily, but hold Fredrickson steady.

Thompson's lip curls.

INT. NCIS CAR

McGee drives. Gibbs is tense in the passenger seat, and DiNozzo and Ziva sit in the rear.

DINOZZO
So, when you say berserk--

GIBBS
I mean berserk.

DiNozzo nods. Uncomfortable silence.

DINOZZO
What kind of berserk?

Gibbs turns to glare at DiNozzo.

EXT. NORMANDY HALL

McGee brings the NCIS car to an abrupt stop before the crowd gathering outside of the house.

The agents look up to see three Frat Boys struggling to hold Fredrickson over the side of the balcony.

GIBBS
That kind.

The agents get out and approach the house.

GIBBS (CONT'D)
Tony, Ziva, around the back and inside. McGee, call for a high rise air-bag in case they drop him.

McGee pulls out his cell phone and walks away dialing. Ziva and DiNozzo circle the house.

Up on the balcony, Fredrickson sobs and repeats a prayer as the three remaining Frat Boys fight to hold on to him.

THOMPSON
(to Frat Boy 4)
Now, soldier, do it!

FRAT BOY 4
Is this a test, sir? I can't just--

Thompson whips out his pistol and points it at Frat Boy 4. Frat Boy 4 immediately lets go and backs away. Fredrickson's body dips as the two boys who are left start to lose their grip.

THOMPSON
And now we're getting down to it.
Tell me what I want to know! Is it worth this boy losing his life?

GIBBS (O.S.)
No, sir, it isn't.

Thompson spins to see Gibbs approaching the house. The Frat Boys on the lawn back off as Gibbs keeps moving forward.

THOMPSON
Back off, Gibbs. I gave you your
chance to do something.

Gibbs reaches the stairs and starts to climb them.

GIBBS
You know I can't do that, sir.
(to the Frat Boys)
Pull your friend back up and get
out of here.

The Frat Boys start to pull Fredrickson up, but Thompson strides forward until his pistol is next to one of the Frat Boys' heads.

THOMPSON
Not until I get some answers.

Behind the admiral, Ziva slowly opens the door leading out to the balcony, and she and Tony creep closer to the admiral.

Ring! Ring! DiNozzo's cell phone goes off.

Startled, the admiral spins around to face him. Ziva reacts immediately, kicking the gun from his hand and lunging toward it.

She reaches it just as the admiral does. They struggle.

DiNozzo looks down at his ringing phone as he kicks the gun away from the admiral.

At the edge of the balcony, the two boys can't quite pull Fredrickson up.

Gibbs notices Fredrickson slipping and rushes to help.

Just as FRAT BOY 5 lets him slip, Gibbs grabs Fredrickson's hand. Frat Boy 5 regains his grip, and the three men pull Fredrickson up. His limp frame falls on top of Gibbs.

Ziva emerges from the scuffle with the admiral, the gun in hand, and points it directly at him.

FRAT BOY 6

Man, I don't know what his problem is. I've seen him do worse things to him than what we did.

Gibbs is still beneath a heaving Fredrickson as DiNozzo walks over and offers him the cell phone.

DINOZZO

You've got Ducky on the line, Gibbs.

GIBBS

I'm in the middle of something.

Gibbs pushes Fredrickson aside.

DINOZZO

You're going to want to hear this.

Gibbs glares and rips the phone from him.

GIBBS

Yes?

DUCKY

We've made a new, and I might say rather astonishing, discovery.

GIBBS

I understood as much. What is it?

DUCKY

Cadet Thompson was dead before the cars hit him.

GIBBS

What exactly are you saying?

DUCKY

The boy was killed in a fall.

Gibbs looks over at the admiral.

The admiral glares back at him.

ACT FOUR

INT. NCIS AUTOPSY ROOM

PALMER

The impact of the vehicles was not the cause of death. A break in the neck suggests that the victim suffered a fall prior to his death.

GIBBS

Suggests?

DUCKY

Dictates. The angle and extent of the fracture in his upper collar bone and neck could only have been incurred as the result of a very serious fall.

DINOZZO

What does this mean?

GIBBS

That the work I've got three agents doing downstairs is virtually worthless.

ZIVA

Not necessarily. It could still be connected. Maybe a cover up for what really happened.

DINOZZO

(sarcastic)

It just might be more nefarious than we thought.

ZIVA

Well, "The Program" theory is certainly out.

DiNozzo glares.

GIBBS

The football movie? Seriously, Ziva, that sounds like something DiNozzo here would be stupid enough to concoct. I'd have thought better of you.

ZIVA

I--

DINOZZO
(smirking)
Yeah, Ziva. Ridiculous.

ZIVA
But, Gibbs, I--

GIBBS
McGee, bring the admiral into the
interrogation room.

DINOZZO
Good idea, boss. We'll get him.

GIBBS
I'm doing this myself. I want you
two to check out the victim's SUV.
Come back with something useful.

EXT. OVERPASS - AFTERNOON

Ziva thoroughly examines the outside of Johnathan's SUV while
DiNozzo stands idly by.

DINOZZO
You wanna grab a pizza?

ZIVA
We're not done yet.

DINOZZO
(snorts)
We were done before we started.

Ziva glares, then returns to her examination.

DINOZZO
What? We were never gonna find
anything here. Gibbs just wanted us
out of the way so he could take the
glory for bagging the admiral.

ZIVA
Or take the flack.

DINOZZO
What flack? If he killed his son,
he killed his son.

ZIVA
And if he didn't?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

The admiral sits at the interrogation table, annoyed. Gibbs circles him, glaring.

THOMPSON

I don't know what the hell you think you're doing, but I will be personally speaking with your superiors--

Gibbs slams his hands into the table, causing it to slide into Thompson's chest. The admiral grunts as his breath is knocked from him.

GIBBS

You used cadets to hang one of their friends over a fifty foot balcony.

THOMPSON

Well, somebody had to do something. Your people certainly weren't. Those soldiers know how my son died! They could tell me--

GIBBS

Boys, admiral. Not soldiers, not yet. And your son died from a fall.

Thompson opens his mouth to speak but is caught off guard.

THOMPSON

(carefully)
What did you just say?

Gibbs shoves his face into Thompson's.

GIBBS

(spitting)
Want to try to tell me that's a coincidence?

Thompson shakes his head.

EXT. OVERPASS

DiNozzo slides into the driver's seat of the SUV and sighs pleurably.

He plays with the radio and air conditioning while Ziva searches the front passenger side.

DINOZZO

You know, I was considering getting one of these.

Puts his feet up on the dash.

Ziva rolls her eyes.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)

3-liter, 220-horsepower V-6 engine, all-wheel drive, luxury interior. And check this out.

Ziva ignores him and moves into the back seat to continue her search.

He fiddles with the seat controls. The seat goes forward and backward. It rises and falls.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)

Except I can't get the seatback to...

He continues fiddling with the controls until finally

WHAM!!

The seatback slams backward onto Ziva.

ZIVA

Aah! Dammit, Tony!

DiNozzo frantically searches for the controls to bring the seat back up.

DINOZZO

Sorry, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to--

ZIVA

What was that?

DINOZZO

My attempt at an apology?

ZIVA

No, no, that noise. Do that again.

DiNozzo fiddles with the controls; the seat rises and falls. There it is. A barely perceptible sound--paper crinkling.

DiNozzo gets up, revealing a crumpled piece of paper.

Ziva picks it up.

DINOZZO
What is it?

She opens it up. Pause.

ZIVA
A suicide note.

They look at each other for a beat.

Then they look over the edge of the overpass.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM

Ducky is there. Abby enters with a laptop.

DUCKY
We're both here.

ZIVA
(on speakerphone)
Okay.

EXT. OVERPASS

Ziva stands above the overpass by the car.

ZIVA (CONT'D)
DiNozzo, you still connected?

EXT. ROAD BELOW

DiNozzo stands underneath the overpass on the road below.

DINOZZO
Yep. I'm here.

He waves.

EXT. OVERPASS

ZIVA
Yes, we just need you two to
confirm the hard evidence. Did you
get my photo?

She looks down at the ledge: two shoe prints.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM

ABBY

The prints are the same size and brand of the shoes found on the body.

ZIVA

And the fall?

DUCKY

The distance is consistent with what we found in the autopsy.

He scans the x-rays.

ABBY

Okay, then what?

EXT. ROAD BELOW

DiNozzo is looking up at Ziva.

ZIVA

Well, we're not sure--

DINOZZO

But somehow the body travels up the road a mile before being hit by twenty-five separate--

WHOOSH! DiNozzo jumps out of the way as a car zooms past.

DINOZZO

Whoa! Did you see that?

ZIVA

(excited)

That's it. What if the twenty-five cars hitting the body was what brought him a mile down the road?

DiNozzo starts walking toward where the body was found.

DINOZZO

Is that possible? That far?

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM

Abby begins to type in her machine and bring up all sorts of data.

DUCKY

It would be consistent with the damage done to the body.

He opens a folder and brings out numerous x-rays.

ABBY
Hey, DiNozzo, what's the speed
limit?

EXT. ROAD BELOW

DINOZZO
Uh...

ZIVA
Sixty-five miles per hour.

DiNozzo looks at the ground as he walks.

DINOZZO
I've passed skid marks.

He gets down on the ground to analyze them and looks up
ahead.

DINOZZO (CONT'D)
Several.

ABBY
Well, assuming that each car was
going an average of...let's make it
seventy miles per hour...

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM

ABBY (CONT'D)
...and taking into account the
boy's weight...

Abby looks to Ducky. He opens a folder and sifts through
papers.

DUCKY
One hundred and fifty-four pounds.

ABBY
The body would be moved...

Abby enters in data and waits.

EXT. ROAD BELOW

DiNozzo makes note of several fresh skid marks.

DINOZZO
More skid marks.

ABBY
...an estimated .892 miles.

ZIVA
That sounds about right.

ABBY
Snap some photos, DiNozzo. And
we'll send a team down. If we can
confirm that the skid marks are
from separate cars and place them
on a timeline...

DUCKY
This theory might have some weight
to it.

ABBY
Let's call Gibbs.

DiNozzo arrives at a road marker: "Drive safely. In Memory of
Jonathan Thompson."

He looks up at Ziva on the overpass: a dot in the distance.

DINOZZO
All this way.

ZIVA
And not a soul stopped to check on
him until those two boys.

Beat.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Gibbs enters the interrogation room solemnly.

THOMPSON
(shouting)
I can't believe you're accusing me
of killing my son! This is
ridiculous! I--

GIBBS
You're right. I'm sorry, Admiral.

THOMPSON
Excuse me?

GIBBS

You're right. I'm sorry, sir, but it looks like your son killed himself. We're sending down a forensic team to confirm now.

THOMPSON

(flabbergasted)

Killed himself? My son didn't kill himself!

GIBBS

The police found his SUV. There was a note inside. I had my agents take a photo. It's in his handwriting.

He hands the photo of the note to the admiral.

Silence as the admiral reads. His face struggles to maintain composure. The slightest glint of tears appear in his eyes.

Thompson throws the photo aside.

THOMPSON

(shouting)

Couldn't take the pressure? I can't-
I can't-- I didn't--

He buries his face in his hands.

EXT. NCIS OFFICE

DiNozzo, McGee, Abby and Ziva leave the building and walk to the parking lot.

MCGEE

All along I thought it was the admiral.

ABBY

Wasn't it?

DINOZZO

Suicide: when one kills oneself.
It's in the definition, Abby.

ABBY

I mean, yeah, he didn't, like, push him over the edge literally, but I saw the note. I read the interviews.

MCGEE
Must be tearing him up inside.

 ZIVA
I just don't get it. His own father
overlooks him. A whole school
ignores him. And then complete
strangers run over his body like it
was a dead animal.

 ABBY
Where's the compassion?

They get to a row of parking spots. Two cars, no car, one
car.

 ABBY
You need a ride, McGee?

 MCGEE
Thanks, but Gibbs already offered.

 DINOZZO
Gibbs?

A Silver 2006 Prius pulls up, and Gibbs pops his head out.

 GIBBS
Hey, McGee, I meant to ask earlier,
you wanna grab a bite before I drop
you off?

 MCGEE
 (beaming)
Really? Sure.

Ziva smiles and raises an eyebrow at Gibbs' unexpected
chivalry.

 GIBBS
What?

Ziva shrugs.

McGee walks to the car door and takes a second look. He gets
in.

 MCGEE
Uh, is this a Prius?

The car pulls away.

Ziva, Abby and DiNozzo share a smile.