

# NCIS

## "The San Dominick"

### Episode #263

Written by

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Directed by Arvin Brown

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**CAST LIST**

SPECIAL AGENT LEROY JETHRO GIBBS  
SPECIAL AGENT TONY DiNOZZO  
DOCTOR DONALD "DUCKY" MALLARD  
FORENSIC SCIENTIST ABBY SCIUTO  
SPECIAL AGENT TIMOTHY McGEE  
PROBATIONARY AGENT ELEANOR "ELLIE" BISHOP

CGIS SPECIAL AGENT ABIGAIL BORIN

FIRST MATE JAMES MEYER  
RENALDO ARANDA A.K.A. ENGINEER  
CAPTAIN TOM O'ROURKE  
COAST GUARD PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS PATRICIA FELTON  
NAVY CHIEF PETTY OFFICER LEONARD JONES  
JAIME RIBEIRO

**VOICE ONLY**

HIJACKER

**FEATURED (non-speaking)**

NAVY PERSONNEL  
COAST GUARD PERSONNEL  
OFFICERS  
ERNESTO VILANDRO A.K.A. JOE WILLIS  
CHIEF HOSPITAL CORPSMAN  
BOARDING PARTY  
MULTICULTURAL CREW  
YOUNG HIJACKER  
HIJACKERS  
JOE WILLIS  
CORPSMAN  
MARITIME SECURITY RESPONSE TEAM (MSRT) /COMMANDOS [X]  
HOSTAGES

**SET LIST**

**EXTERIORS (DAY)**

USS SERANO  
    HELO HANGAR DECK  
    HELO DECK  
    MAIN DECK  
ATLANTIC OCEAN  
THE SAN DOMINICK  
    BOARDING RAMP

**INTERIORS (DAY)**

NCIS HEADQUARTERS  
    SQUAD ROOM  
    AUTOPSY ROOM  
    ABBY'S LAB  
USS SERANO  
    LOWER DECK  
    EMPTY ROOM  
    HELO HANGAR DECK  
    OPERATIONS ROOM  
    PASSAGEWAY  
    SICK BAY  
    COMMAND CENTER  
THE SAN DOMINICK  
    BOARDING RAMP  
    PASSAGEWAY  
    RADIO ROOM  
    TOOL SHOP  
NORFOLK APARTMENT BUILDING  
    HALLWAY  
    JOE WILLIS' APARTMENT

**EXTERIORS (NIGHT)**

INDUSTRIAL PARKING LOT  
    PICK-UP TRUCK

**INTERIORS (NIGHT)**

NCIS HEADQUARTERS  
    SQUAD ROOM  
USS SERANO  
    COMMAND CENTER  
THE SAN DOMINICK  
    MESS DECK  
    CREW BUNKROOM  
    LOWER CARGO HOLD  
    CONTAINER  
PICK-UP TRUCK

[X]

NCIS

"THE SAN DOMINICK"

COLD OPEN

**FROM BLACK:**

**FLASH - BLACK-AND-WHITE OF GIBBS' DETERMINED EXPRESSION.**

**PHOOF TO BLACK:**

FROM BLACK:

1 INT. USS SERANO - LOWER DECK - ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY 1

TIGHT ON PROBATIONARY AGENT ELEANOR "ELLIE" BISHOP as she makes her way through the passage of the dimly lit ship. SIG outstretched, breathing ragged, totally focused.

Quick movement and SOUND from the end of the passage. Bishop stops. She's got an EARWIG in. Talks into the receiver.

BISHOP

This is Bishop. I've tracked the final suspect. Compartment two tack eight-three tack two.

She eyeballs the corners as she moves. Making certain nothing lurks in the shadows. She approaches a door at the end of the passage. It's partially open.

Bishop takes a beat and pushes into --

2 INT. USS SERANO - EMPTY ROOM - CONTINUOUS 2

-- Where she finds a MASKED ASSAILANT.

BISHOP

NCIS. Hands in the air!

The Masked Assailant makes no move to comply.

BISHOP (cont'd)

I said, hands in the--

A SECOND MASKED MAN grabs her from behind, wresting control of her SIG as he puts a KNIFE to her throat. Bishop struggles, throwing elbows. But it's no use. Just before the knife starts to cut her throat, the Masked Assailant in front of her takes off his mask revealing himself as SPECIAL AGENT LEROY JETHRO GIBBS.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

He looks into Bishop's pleading eyes.

GIBBS  
You're dead, Bishop.

Bishop stops fighting. Deflated --

BISHOP  
I know.

And at that, the Second Masked Man releases his grip, pulls off his mask. It's SPECIAL AGENT TONY DiNOZZO. He offers Bishop her SIG as he rubs his rib cage.

TONY  
You've got hard elbows.

3 EXT./INT. USS SERANO - HELO HANGAR/DECK - DAY 3

A joint training operation in effect. NAVY and COAST GUARD PERSONNEL everywhere. WE FIND Tony and Bishop as they walk.

BISHOP  
I failed.

TONY  
Not exactly.

BISHOP  
You heard Gibbs. I died. There's no coming back from that.

TONY  
You are aware you didn't *actually* die? It's a training exercise.

Gibbs strides by heading toward a group of OFFICERS.

BISHOP  
He won't even look at me.

TONY  
That's just his form of silent encouragement.

WOMAN'S VOICE  
DiNozzo!

ANGLE ON CGIS SPECIAL AGENT ABIGAIL BORIN as she approaches.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

TONY

Ah, the Julie McCoy of our joint training operation.

BORIN

Heard you've been knocking boots with Leia Pendergast.

TONY

From who?

BORIN

From Leia. We SoulCycle.  
(off Tony)  
It's exercise.

TONY

Leia's fun. Fascinating talents. Mixes a mean Tom Collins. But it's not a love connection, just a dalliance.

BORIN

Hey, DiNozzo. I'm not your diary. Dally who you want.

TONY

Bishop, this is CGIS Special Agent Abigail Borin, she's into cardio and interagency gossip. Borin, this is--

BORIN

Ellie Bishop, I know. I just observed your exercise. Passable work for a probie.

TONY

See? You didn't fail. You passed.

Bishop's not comforted. Even more so after Gibbs passes yet again. As far as Bishop's concerned, he's ignoring her. She makes a decision. Turns to Borin.

BISHOP

I need to go again.

BORIN

There's no do-overs in training.  
(softer)  
Hang in there, you're doing fine.

Bishop wants to be able to believe it.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

BISHOP

I don't get it. I did everything right. Followed procedure to the letter. *Coulda sworn there was only one suspect left.*

TONY

Oh, Probie. It's not about procedure. It's about this--

(gestures to his head)

And this--

(pounds his chest)

And these--

(points to his eyes)

Three-hundred-and-sixty-degree awareness. Only comes with experience. Right, Borin?

(no response)

Borin?

But Borin is no longer with them. She's joined Gibbs, who's standing at the railing looking out at sea. Something's off.

BORIN

What do you see, Gibbs?

GIBBS

On your two o'clock...

Gibbs gestures toward the horizon. Borin looks. Sees it too. And then, in tandem --

GIBBS/BORIN

Man overboard!!!

Off the WAIL of the ship's SIREN.

**MAIN TITLES**

FROM BLACK:

4 OMITTED

4

5 EXT. USS SERANO - MAIN DECK - DAY

5

Gibbs heads toward the body, where Tony confers with the CHIEF HOSPITAL CORPSMAN. Bishop joins Gibbs.

BISHOP

The X.O. confirms all Navy and Coast Guard personnel are accounted for. Whoever the victim is, he's not from this ship...

Gibbs goes to Tony, who has the dead man's EMPLOYEE I.D.

TONY

According to his I.D., he's Joe Willis, a crew member on the San Dominick. Civilian, probably.

GIBBS

Cause of death?

TONY

Corpsman found water in his lungs when he tried to resuscitate. But it's too soon to tell.

GIBBS

Bishop. What do you see?

Another test. Bishop's ready. Leans down. Notices --

BISHOP

No bloating.

GIBBS

Which means...

BISHOP

He hasn't been floating out here for long... A couple hours...

GIBBS

And...?

Bishop gets a closer look.

BISHOP

Looks like bruising on his skin. He was in a fight.

(CONTINUED)



5 CONTINUED:

5

TONY

Or he fell fifty feet off the side  
of a ship... Could be an accident.

Yeah, but Gibbs' gut says different. As he walks off --

6 INT. USS SERANO - OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

6

The nerve center for the joint training exercise and Borin's  
makeshift command center. Gibbs, Tony and Bishop enter.

BORIN

The San Dominick is a cargo ship  
that left port in Norfolk three  
hours ago.

TONY

They wondering why they're one man  
short?

BORIN

Hard to say. Haven't responded to  
our calls. Complete radio silence.

Not good.

BORIN (cont'd)

That's not all. Look at this...

She leads them to a NAVIGATION COMPUTER that shows all ships  
in the area.

BORIN (cont'd)

San Dominick is supposed to be en  
route to the Port of Bilbao, Spain.

ON THE MONITOR we see the ICON representing the San Dominick  
as it heads slowly down the screen.

GIBBS

They're off course.

TONY

Heading south.

BORIN

The San Dominick is American owned,  
but it's Panamanian flagged.

GIBBS

Both our jurisdictions.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

BORIN

No Coast Guard patrols in the area.  
We're the closest vessel.

GIBBS

How far?

BORIN

Sixty nautical miles. We can be  
there in a couple hours.

GIBBS

Bishop, pack up. You're escorting  
the body back to NCIS.

(then)

We're going after the San Dominick.

**Off Gibbs' determined look...**

**PHOOF TO BLACK.**

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

**FROM BLACK:**

**FLASH - BLACK-AND-WHITE OF GIBBS' STOIC EXPRESSION...**

**PHOOF TO BLACK:**

FROM BLACK:

7 INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM - DAY

7

DING! Elevator doors open as a windswept Bishop heads to the BULLPEN, where SPECIAL AGENT TIMOTHY MCGEE works.

MCGEE

The trainee returns. How'd it go?

BISHOP

I don't want to talk about it.

MCGEE

That good, huh?

BISHOP

I just spent the last hour on the choppiest helo ride of my life, clutching a dead body so it didn't shift because the tie-down rings were loose... Let's call that the high point of my morning...

(then)

You run background on our victim?

McGee turns to his computer.

MCGEE

The company that owns the San Dominick - Stalten Shipping - sent me Joe Willis' employee records.

McGee brings them up on the PLASMA. Bishop scans it --

BISHOP

Forty years old... From Dover, Delaware. Lives in Norfolk... Served fifteen years in the Navy. He's ready reserve.

MCGEE

Hired last month as security for Stalten's transatlantic runs.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

BISHOP

Why does a cargo ship need an armed guard?

MCGEE

Piracy, terrorism... Shipping companies want to be prepared...

BISHOP

Ducky's starting his autopsy, We'll know if it was murder soon.

McGee turns his attention to Bishop.

MCGEE

Want to talk about the test?

BISHOP

No.

MCGEE

Okay... I'll drop it.

McGee turns back to his desk. Bishop can't contain herself.

BISHOP

I did everything right. I was textbook. How could I fail?

McGee turns back to her.

MCGEE

Easy. Everyone fails.  
(off Bishop)  
It's the Kobayashi Maru [ko-bee-AH-shee mah-roo].

BISHOP

Kobayashi Ma-what?

MCGEE

Kobayashi Maru. From *the Wrath of Khan*.

BISHOP

*Star Wars* again?

MCGEE

*Star Trek*.

BISHOP

Same difference.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

MCGEE

*Star Wars* is grounded in mythology.  
*Star Trek* is grounded in science --

BISHOP

Tim. Focus. Kobayashi Maru.

MCGEE

Right. Kobayashi Maru was a  
training exercise on the  
Enterprise...

BISHOP

...Which is a spaceship...?

MCGEE

...Which is beside the point. It's  
a lose-lose scenario. No matter  
what choices you make, there's no  
way to win.

Bishop takes this in.

BISHOP

They added an extra suspect to my  
exercise? Knew I counted right.

(McGee nods)

That's...cheating.

MCGEE

Not exactly.

BISHOP

They acted dishonestly to gain  
advantage.

MCGEE

It's supposed to build character.

BISHOP

*By cheating.*

MCGEE

All I'm saying is you shouldn't  
feel bad, Bishop. Nobody passes  
that exercise. Not me. Not Tony.  
Not Kirk. Well, Kirk technically--

BISHOP

What about Gibbs?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (3)

7

MCGEE  
No. Gibbs passed.

BISHOP  
How?

MCGEE  
(obviously)  
He's Gibbs.

8 EXT. ATLANTIC OCEAN - DAY (ESTABLISHING) (VFX)

8

The San Dominick and the USS Serano alongside each other.

9 EXT./INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - BOARDING RAMP - DAY

9

Gibbs, Borin and a small four-person BOARDING PARTY (two Navy, two Coast Guard) walk up the RAMP to the Main Deck with FIRST MATE JAMES MEYER, 30s.

GIBBS  
Special Agent Gibbs, NCIS. This is  
Special Agent Borin, CGIS.

MEYER  
We speeding, Officer?  
(off their silence)  
Bad joke. Not everyday you get  
pulled over by a Navy cruiser.

BORIN  
Where's the captain?

MEYER  
Below deck. I'm James Meyer, first  
mate. What can I do you for?

GIBBS  
Get the captain.

MEYER  
He's a little busy captaining right  
now. He'll be up soon. Maybe I  
can help.

They come to the MAIN DECK, where the MULTICULTURAL CREW are all standing, working hard to look casual. Borin eyes them.

BORIN  
You aware that you're off course?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

MEYER

Sure. Inclement weather ahead,  
we're trying to avoid it.

GIBBS

Not answering your radio either.

MEYER

Comm's on the fritz. That's what  
the captain's working on.

BORIN

Crew accounted for?

MEYER

Yeah...I'm sorry. Feel like we're  
not on the same page. What's this  
about?

GIBBS

Joe Willis. Your security officer.

MEYER

He in some kind of trouble?

Borin shows him her PHONE with a PHOTO of Joe Willis' body.

GIBBS

You could say that.

Meyer reacts.

MEYER

Holy crap.

BORIN

Same page, now?

10 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - PASSAGEWAY - DAY

10

Gibbs and Borin walk with CAPTAIN TOM O'ROURKE, who sucks on  
CHEWING TOBACCO (carrying a SPIT CUP) while his ENGINEER  
trails them mutely.

O'ROURKE

See, I knew it. I'm cursed. First  
the radio, then the weather, now  
this...terrible accident.

BORIN

Can you tell us where Joe Willis  
was supposed to be, Captain?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

O'ROURKE

Doing his rounds. Security check.  
Slipped off deck, I guess.

GIBBS

Did he?

O'ROURKE

What are you thinking?

BORIN

Don't know. Body's being examined.  
We need a manifest and crew list.

O'ROURKE

Why?

GIBBS

Gonna question them.

O'Rourke stops.

O'ROURKE

Now?

BORIN

What is it with the people on this  
ship? Yes, now. *A man is dead.*

O'ROURKE

*By accident.* And I appreciate your  
position. But you need to  
appreciate mine. I'm three hours  
off schedule...

BORIN

Gee, that's rough.

O'ROURKE

I get it. You're investigating a  
crime. But from my perspective...  
We're all just trying to make a  
living here. Can't we handle this  
after we've finished our run...?

GIBBS

No.

O'Rourke sighs. Looks to his Engineer briefly, then --

(CONTINUED)



10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

O'ROURKE  
I'm telling you as captain of this  
ship there is absolutely nothing  
illegal or...or...suspicious...

O'Rourke trails off. His face pale as a ghost.

BORIN  
You okay, Captain?

O'ROURKE  
Yeah. Just need to sit--

O'Rourke collapses to the floor. Borin leans down, opening  
his jacket to reveal his shirt covered in BLOOD.

BORIN  
He's been stabbed.

11 INT. NCIS AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

11

ON THE DEAD MAN'S HAND as DOCTOR DONALD "DUCKY" MALLARD  
handles it.

BISHOP  
You've known Gibbs the longest.  
How does he do it? How does he  
pass a test engineered for failure?

DUCKY  
You may as well ask how he knows  
what you're going to say before you  
say it? Or how does he appear out  
of thin air?

That's exactly what she wants to know.

DUCKY (cont'd)  
That's what makes him Gibbs.

Not the answer she wants. Ducky turns to the autopsy table.

DUCKY (cont'd)  
I believe my conclusions on this  
fellow will be more satisfying...  
He was in a fight. Note the  
defensive wounds. Probably from a  
knife.  
(re: victim's hands)  
Received, no doubt, as he fended  
off what appears to be a violent  
attack.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

BISHOP

Was he stabbed?

DUCKY

No. The ship's doctor was correct,  
this man drowned.

BISHOP

Maybe he jumped overboard, trying  
to escape his attacker.

DUCKY

I assure you our victim was quite  
dead when he hit the ocean.

(explaining)

The water in his lungs was not sea  
water. I'm waiting for  
confirmation from Abby, but my  
guess is that it was potable water,  
treated with chemicals for use on  
the San Dominick.

BISHOP

Confirms Joe Willis was murdered.

DUCKY

That I cannot say.

BISHOP

You just told me Joe Willis was  
drowned on the San Dominick.

DUCKY

I just told you *this man* was  
drowned on the San Dominick. This  
man is not Joe Willis.

Ducky refers to X-RAYS.

DUCKY (cont'd)

According to Joe Willis' record, he  
served fifteen years in the Navy.

BISHOP

That's right.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

DUCKY

The autopsy showed that he suffered from kidney agenesis, a birth defect that has no discernible consequence on living a normal, healthy life, with the possible exception of passing the medical examination to serve in the armed forces.

BISHOP

...Since there's no waiver for enlistees with only one kidney.

(Ducky nods)

If he's not Joe Willis, who is he?

Off this very good question.

12 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - PASSAGEWAY/RADIO ROOM - DAY

12

Gibbs and COAST GUARD PETTY OFFICER FIRST CLASS PATRICIA FELTON, 20s, follow Meyer and the Engineer.

MEYER

Skipper gonna be okay?

GIBBS

Special Agent Borin is escorting him to our ship's corpsman.

MEYER

I can't believe this is happening.

GIBBS

Captain O'Rourke and Joe Willis have any kind of problems?

MEYER

Skipper doesn't have problems. Everyone loves him.

GIBBS

Not everyone.

They enter the RADIO ROOM. It's a mess. BLOOD, a bloody KNIFE. The door to the HEAD open. Clearly a crime scene.

MEYER

Holy crap.

Gibbs looks through the room. Notes the open door to the head; the floor is DAMP WITH WATER. BLOODY HANDPRINTS around the toilet.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

MEYER (cont'd)  
(who sees it too)  
Willis was drowned in the head?

Gibbs stays silent. Notices a SCRAP OF PAPER in a bloody puddle. Picks it up with a GLOVE. It's a SERIES OF NUMBERS.

As Gibbs turns back to the radio room, the Engineer is standing directly in front of him.

GIBBS  
Excuse me.

The Engineer steps aside. Gibbs turns his attention to the RADIO. Crouches down and notices the wires have been cut.

He turns back toward Meyer, noticing something on the Engineer that doesn't fit.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
(to Meyer)  
We need to speak. Alone.

Meyer looks to the Engineer as if asking for approval. Gibbs clocks this.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
Hey. It's not a request.  
(to Felton)  
Petty Officer, escort this man out  
of the radio room.

Felton approaches the Engineer. Leads him out of the room.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
This radio was sabotaged.

MEYER  
Holy--

GIBBS  
Stop.

MEYER  
I have no--

GIBBS  
Don't.

Meyer clams up.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2) 12

GIBBS (cont'd)  
Busted radio, dead security  
officer, wounded captain... And  
him...

Gibbs points out the door where the Engineer went.

MEYER  
Renaldo? He's--

GIBBS  
--Wearing canvas shoes. Not steel-  
toed boots. Who is he? Because  
he's not part of your crew...

Off Meyer's stricken look.

13 INT. USS SERANO - OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY 13

Borin enters to find Tony.

BORIN  
Captain's stable, but he lost a lot  
of blood. Knife nicked an artery.

TONY  
Security Officer's not the security  
officer. Ducky says our dead man  
was an imposter.

BORIN  
You tell Gibbs yet?

TONY  
Calling him now.

Tony goes to the radio.

BORIN  
What the hell is happening on that  
ship?

Tony's cell RINGS. Abby's on the CALLER I.D. Tony answers.

TONY  
What's up, Abby?

INTERCUT WITH:

14 INT. ABBY'S LAB - DAY 14

FORENSIC SCIENTIST ABBY SCIUTO at the speakerphone.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

ABBY

Just got positive identification on your drowning victim. His name is Ernesto Vilandro. Venezuelan. He's wanted in five countries.

TONY

For what?

ABBY

Piracy, Tony. I e-mailed his file and a list of known associates.

Tony goes to a COMPUTER. Opens the E-MAIL. Various PHOTOS of Vilandro's known associates, including: Renaldo Aranda - who just happens to be the engineer from the San Dominick.

BORIN

I've seen that man. He's the engineer on the San Dominick. Tell Gibbs now!

(heads out)

I'm going back on the ship...

As Tony goes to the radio --

15 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - RADIO ROOM - DAY

15

Gibbs stands with Meyer as his WALKIE comes to life.

TONY (V.O.)

Gibbs, come in. It's Tony. Man we found in the water is wanted for piracy. There's at least another pirate on the ship. Renaldo Aranda. The engineer... Ship's been compromised.

Gibbs reaches for his walkie until --

ARANDA'S VOICE

Don't answer.

Gibbs turns to see the Engineer - now known as RENALDO ARANDA - with Petty Officer Felton in his grip. She's bleeding from the side of her head, Aranda is pointing a gun at Gibbs.

**Off Gibbs' stoic expression...**

**PHOOF TO BLACK.**

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**FROM BLACK:****FLASH - BLACK-AND-WHITE OF GIBBS' GRIM RESOLUTION.****PHOOF TO BLACK:**

FROM BLACK

16 INT. USS SERANO - OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY 16

NAVY CHIEF PETTY OFFICER LEONARD JONES at the command center on the RADIO.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER JONES  
Cargo vessel San Dominick, this is  
United States Navy Warship Seven-  
Nine, hailing you on channel one-  
six, over!

As he continues trying to reach them --

NEW ANGLE ON Tony and Borin at the ship's MONITOR, talking to McGee and Bishop over a VIDEO CONFERENCE.

BORIN  
Spotters saw armed men leading  
members of the boarding party below  
deck. Ship's compromised.

MCGEE  
What about Gibbs?

TONY  
No word.

Not good. Then --

BISHOP  
How did a band of armed pirates  
sneak onto a U.S. cargo ship  
without anyone noticing?

TONY  
Kind of hoping you'd tell us...

INTERCUT WITH:

17 INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM - DAY 17

McGee and Bishop talk to Tony and Borin at McGee's computer.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

MCGEE

Our victim, Ernesto Vilandro, got on impersonating the security officer.

TONY

And the real security officer?

BISHOP

Joe Willis was last seen at a Norfolk bar ten days ago. Got his home address. Heading there now.

BORIN

We need more. Who are these men? What do they want?

TONY

Cross-reference crew records on the San Dominick. Verify identities. Weed out any other imposters.

BORIN

Find out if Vilandro has anymore associates in the area.

BISHOP

On it.

Chief Petty Officer Jones approaches.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER JONES

Who's in charge here?

TONY

Right here.

BORIN

That's me.

Oops. Tony and Borin look at each other. Little detail needs to be worked out.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER JONES (cont'd)

It's CAMSLANT, Chesapeake. Calling from shore.

Borin takes the call. Tony returns to McGee and Bishop.

TONY

Vilandro was smart. Knew the crews on these ships change all the time. No one would realize he was an imposter.

Bishop pulls up an E-MAIL on her PHONE.

(CONTINUED)



17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

BISHOP

Some one realized it, Tony. Got a report from Interpol. Last time Vilandro took a ship was two years ago. Outside The Port of Santos.

MCGEE

Held its captain for ten days during a standoff with the Brazilian Navy. Somehow escaped when they forcibly boarded.

BISHOP

The man he held hostage was Tom O'Rourke. Captain of the San Dominick.

Tony's interest is piqued.

MCGEE

He happen to mention that to you when he was brought on board?

TONY

He was too busy bleeding from a stab wound. But I'll be sure to bring it up.

Tony notices Borin finishing her call.

TONY (cont'd)

Gibbs isn't there, me either. You're boss now...

MCGEE

Me...? Tony--

TONY

Don't mess up.

Tony hangs up. McGee and Bishop share a look.

BISHOP

Guess you're the boss, *Boss*.

MCGEE

Can he even do that?

END INTERCUT.

18 INT. USS SERANO - OPERATIONS ROOM/PASSAGEWAY - DAY 18

Tony goes to Borin. Leads her into the PASSAGEWAY, away from prying ears.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

TONY

This isn't going to work unless everyone knows who's in charge.

BORIN

Agreed. No need for two alphas nipping at each other's heels.

TONY

Right. Gibbs is my boss. I've worked with him a long time--

BORIN

--Which is exactly why I'm taking the lead.

TONY

Excuse me?

BORIN

It's not even a question, Tony. You're too personally involved. If Gibbs were here, he'd agree.

TONY

But he's not.

BORIN

My command. My call.

Tony's not ready to give up.

BORIN (cont'd)

I've done this before, Tony. Negotiated with pirates in a hostage situation. Have you?

TONY

High-school kid strapped with a bomb count?

No.

BORIN

I'm good at it. And all my negotiations end in the safe release of the hostages.

(then)

Can't say the same for the hijackers.

She half smiles. Tony takes this in. Accepts it. For now. They head back into OPERATIONS.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: (2)

18

TONY

What's our move?

BORIN

Open a line of communication.

Tony nods. Then they both reach for the RADIO RECEIVER. An awkward moment. Borin defers. Tony takes the radio.

TONY (INTO WALKIE)

This is the USS Serano calling the  
San Dominick, come in San Dominick...

19 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - RADIO ROOM - DAY

19

CLOSE ON A WALKIE-TALKIE as it SQUAWKS...

TONY (V.O.)

...Repeat. This is the USS Serano.  
Come in, San Dominick.

Pull back to REVEAL the walkie sits on a table amongst various CHARTS and a SUBMACHINE GUN belonging to Aranda, who's got Gibbs' SIG in his waistband. He confers with a YOUNG HIJACKER, who seems a little panicked, while other HIJACKERS come in and out. Aranda is trying to stay calm himself as he gives instructions, except--

ARANDA

Can't think! Turn it down!

A HIJACKER goes to turn down the volume on the walkie.

ON GIBBS, who sits next to Meyer and Petty Officer Felton, who bleeds badly from the side of her head. Gibbs eyes the Hijackers as he quietly talks to a nervous Meyer.

GIBBS

How many crew on board?

MEYER

Twenty.

GIBBS

And hijackers?

Aranda throws them a dirty look.

ARANDA

No talking!

He turns back to his men. Gibbs keeps his eyes on Aranda.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

GIBBS

How many?

MEYER

(whispering)

I think six or seven...

Aranda turns again. A warning look. Then Aranda heads out to the HALL, where he talks to another HIJACKER.

GIBBS

Where's the crew being held?

MEYER

He told us to be quiet.

GIBBS

Where?

MEYER

Mess Deck...all right? Now let's just...

He puts his fingers to his lips in a keep-quiet motion. Gibbs turns to Felton, who doesn't look good, bleeding badly.

GIBBS

Hanging in there, Guardsman?

FELTON

Trying, Sir... Can't seem to stop the bleeding. Feeling dizzy.

Gibbs finds a CLEAN RAG nearby. Grabs it, tends to her.

GIBBS

What's your name?

FELTON

Petty Officer Felton.

GIBBS

Your first name.

FELTON

Patricia...

GIBBS

People call you Patty?

Felton nods, but Gibbs can see --

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

GIBBS (cont'd)  
You hate being called Patty.

Felton can't help but laugh a little. But it hurts. A lot.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
That's good, Patricia. You can  
still laugh. Next, breathe. Three  
in, three out.

Gibbs demonstrates. Felton follows suit. Gibbs guides her  
hand to hold the rag in place.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
Keep pressure on it. Bleeding  
should stop. You'll be okay.

ARANDA'S VOICE  
I said shut up!

REVEAL ARANDA, who is all of a sudden right on top of them.  
Submachine gun waving in their faces.

ARANDA  
What the hell are you doing!

Gibbs ignores Aranda, focused on Felton, who's not doing well.

GIBBS  
Keep breathing, Patricia.

ARANDA  
No talking!

Meyer interjects --

MEYER  
She's bleeding, man. Can't stop  
it.

ARANDA  
I can.

Aranda points his gun in Felton's face.

MEYER  
By threatening to shoot her?

ARANDA  
Who says it's a threat?

Gibbs just stares at Aranda. And then --

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (3)

19

GIBBS  
You're over your head.

Aranda turns to Gibbs, who's figured something out --

GIBBS (cont'd)  
Vilandro was the leader, wasn't he?

Aranda aims his gun at Gibbs.

ARANDA  
He's gone. Now it's me.

GIBBS  
*Then lead.* Answer the damn walkie,  
get your ransom, and get off this  
boat.

Aranda keeps staring at Gibbs, then finally turns away.  
Gibbs puts a calming hand on Felton's shoulder.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
In, two, three. Out, two, three.

He keeps watching Aranda, who goes to the WALKIE, picks it  
up.

ARANDA (INTO WALKIE)  
Attention, USS Serano... This is  
the San Dominick...

20 INT. USS SERANO - OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

20

Tony answers immediately with Borin right by his side.

TONY  
We read you, San Dominick. This is  
NCIS Special Agent Tony Di--

ARANDA (V.O.)  
We want ten million dollars in  
unmarked bills delivered in one  
hour's time. Or we will shoot a  
hostage and toss them overboard.

Tony and Borin share a look. Borin takes the radio.

BORIN  
This is Special Agent Abigail  
Borin. Are you Renaldo Aranda?  
(no response)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 20

BORIN (cont'd)  
We'll talk about money as soon as I  
can get a status report on--

ARANDA (V.O.)  
Now, you have fifty-nine minutes.

Nothing but static.

TONY  
This how your other negotiations  
went?

Borin's silence is all the answer Tony needs.

21 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NORFOLK - DAY 21

A FIST KNOCKING at a door. KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

MCGEE  
Joe Willis? Open up. NCIS.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL McGee and Bishop standing at the door.  
No response. McGee KNOCKS again.

BISHOP  
Mister Willis? We need to ask you  
a few questions...

Still nothing. Bishop looks to McGee.

BISHOP (cont'd)  
What do we do, *Boss*?

McGee flinches.

MCGEE  
Please stop calling me that.

McGee tries the door handle. It's unlocked. He pushes in --

22 INT. JOE WILLIS' APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 22

As soon as McGee and Bishop enter, they cover their noses.  
The place STINKS. And no wonder. It's a huge mess. DIRTY  
CLOTHES, piles of old TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS, MOLDY FOOD.

BISHOP  
It's every smell I can't stand  
rolled into one super-smell.

McGee pulls a CURTAIN OPEN bathing the mess in LIGHT.

(CONTINUED)



22 CONTINUED:

22

MCGEE

Willis lives alone...why does it look like a frat house exploded?

BISHOP

Kitchen or bathroom... Where do you want me?

It's McGee's call. He's senior man. He considers --

MCGEE

Take the kitchen...

Bishop goes to the KITCHENETTE. Notes the overflowing TRASH CAN. Gingerly begins to pull ITEMS out.

BISHOP

I've got empty boxes of ammo. Seven-point-six-two millimeter. A lot of them... Guess we know where the hijackers were staying...

MCGEE

Think we know how they snuck on the San Dominick, too.

McGee has found a LAMINATING MACHINE and aborted FAKE IDs.

MCGEE (cont'd)

They falsified IDs and walked on with the rest of the crew...

BISHOP

That leaves two questions... Was Joe Willis a conspirator?

Bishop holds up a mysterious JAR filled with liquid.

BISHOP (cont'd)

And what exactly is in this jar?

McGee just gives her a look. Then, realizing --

BISHOP (cont'd)

It's urine, isn't it?  
(puts it down quickly)  
Would it have killed them to use the bathroom.

McGee has just pushed the bathroom door open.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

MCGEE

I'm gonna go with yes.

Bishop joins him to see Joe Willis' dead body floating in the bathtub.

23 EXT. USS SERANO - HELO DECK - DAY

23

O'Rourke is in a GURNEY, hooked to an I.V. His midsection is BANDAGED. He opens his eyes to see Tony standing above him. A CORPSMAN is nearby as the MEDEVAC HELO is being prepped.

O'ROURKE

Where am I?

TONY

On the USS Serano.

O'ROURKE

And my ship?

TONY

It's being held by pirates.

O'ROURKE

I should be there.

The moment he tries to move, he's hit with paralyzing pain.

TONY

Not going anywhere, Captain, except a medevac to Norfolk. Which'll be leaving any minute.

O'Rourke stops trying to move. Breathes through the pain.

O'ROURKE

Had a package of chew in my shirt pocket, any chance it's around?

TONY

Your shirt's in an evidence bag...

O'ROURKE

Time I quit anyway. Bad habit.

TONY

Wanna tell me what happened?

O'ROURKE

Trip like this. Your eyes always scan the horizon for pirates.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

O'ROURKE (cont'd)

Never expected them to be part of my own crew.

TONY

That's what's giving me trouble. You didn't notice the man who took your boat today was the same man who held you hostage two years ago?

O'ROURKE

I *did* notice. There isn't a detail about Ernesto Vilandro I haven't committed to memory...

TONY

You didn't do anything about it.

O'ROURKE

(beat)

They called me a hero last time this happened. Because I got my crew off the boat.

(then)

Truth is, I told my crew to run to the lifeboats. I ran too, not fast enough...

TONY

And today? When you saw Vilandro?

O'ROURKE

I knew exactly who he was... I was too scared to do anything.

O'Rourke turns away, shame overtaking him.

TONY

Not much you could have done, if the pirates were already on board.

(then)

Any idea why Vilandro would target you a second time?

O'ROURKE

Just lucky, I guess...

(then)

Had to stop him. Hijackers locked the crew up in the mess. But Vilandro needed me to work the comm. It was him and me...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

TONY  
You jumped him.

O'ROURKE  
I wasn't giving up my ship. Not to  
Vilandro, not again... Radio got  
destroyed in the fight... I tossed  
Vilandro overboard. Hoped someone  
would find the body.

TONY  
You did good, Captain.

O'ROURKE  
Good would be me back on my ship.

Tony knows what he means; he wants to be there too.

24 INT. USS SERANO - OPERATIONS ROOM - DAY

24

Tony enters, heading straight for Borin at the radio.

TONY  
O'Rourke's medevac left. He's en  
route to Norfolk.

BORIN  
Hour's up. Time to contact Aranda.

TONY  
And what exactly are you going to  
say when he asks for his money?

BORIN  
I'm going to ask *him* his preference  
in powerboats. Did you know there  
are seventeen distinct categories  
of fast boats?

TONY  
I did not.

BORIN  
Hostage Negotiation 101, DiNozzo.  
Keep them stalled. Keep them calm.  
Keep them talking...  
(grabs radio receiver)  
This is the USS Serano to the San  
Dominick. Come in...

ARANDA (V.O.)  
You have the money?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

BORIN

We're close. My boss signed off on it. Bank's processing the request. Shouldn't be long--

INTERCUT WITH:

25 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - RADIO ROOM - DAY

25

Aranda is on the walkie with Gibbs, Meyer and Felton seated.

ARANDA

You're stalling and it won't work.

Tony looks to Borin, who's not worried.

BORIN

You asked for ten million dollars. Little more complicated than a trip to the ATM. Let's talk escape boats. I like a bowrider myself--

ARANDA

*I don't need a boat.* This isn't a negotiation, it's a demand. Blood's on your hands now.

Tony takes the radio control from Borin.

TONY

Hold on. Just take a breath, okay, buddy. No need for anymore blood. Hello? Hello...?

ON ARANDA as he turns to Felton, who's still hurting.

ARANDA

On your feet.

FELTON

What...

Aranda grabs her by the arm. Pulls her roughly up.

ARANDA

Get up now!

Gibbs puts a warning hand on a riled Meyer, but it's no use.

MEYER

Come on, man! Let go of--

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

Aranda whips around, smacking Meyer hard with his submachine gun, points the barrel right at him.

ARANDA  
Wanna take her place?

Gibbs is already on his feet --

GIBBS  
I do.

Aranda turns on Gibbs, pointing his gun.

**Off Gibbs' grim resolution...**

**PHOOF TO BLACK.**

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FROM BLACK:

FLASH - BLACK-AND-WHITE OF GIBBS BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE....

PHOOF TO BLACK:

FROM BLACK:

26 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - PASSAGEWAY - DAY 26

Aranda leads Gibbs through the passageway toward the MAIN DECK. He has his submachine gun in one hand, and his walkie in the other. Over the WALKIE we hear --

TONY (V.O.)  
San Dominick, come in, this is the  
USS Serano. I've got your cash.  
But I need you to respond.

ARANDA (ON WALKIE)  
Now you have the money?

INTERCUT WITH:

27 EXT. USS SERANO - MAIN DECK - DAY 27

Tony is on a WALKIE, near the railing, looking across the water with BINOCULARS to the San Dominick. He turns to Borin, who's on a SATELLITE PHONE.

BORIN (ON PHONE)  
I don't care how you do it, you  
gotta have some drug seizure money  
somewhere in evidence...

Tony turns away from her.

TONY (ON RADIO)  
It's close. Thirty minutes...

BORIN (ON PHONE)  
I'll take counterfeit. Hell, I'll  
take *Monopoly* money.

Thinking better of his estimate --

TONY  
...Maybe forty.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

ON ARANDA, who's frustrated. Gibbs is still as a mountain.

ARANDA

Unbelievable! Still stalling.  
Still trying to trick me. The only  
way you'll take me seriously is  
with a bullet.

TONY

We're getting your money. Soon as  
we do, I'll bring it personally.

ARANDA

You and how many snipers?

Tony's gaze turns toward the MARITIME SECURITY RESPONSE TEAM (MSRT) that's just arrived, five COMMANDOS geared up for an assault.

TONY

No snipers. No tricks. Just me.

ARANDA

I'm supposed to believe you?

TONY

You chose this line of work. You  
kicked our hornet's nest. I'm just  
saying no one else has to get hurt.

Aranda stares at Gibbs, who stares back.

ARANDA

You're wrong, though. Your man's  
going to be hurt.

TONY

...Gibbs. You mean Gibbs?

ARANDA

And I'm making an example of him.

Tony reacts. He's concerned. Covering --

TONY

Hey, pal. I get it. Gibbs can be  
grumpy, incommunicative, stubborn.  
But that's no reason to--

ARANDA

Enough. Say goodbye.

(CONTINUED)



27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

TONY

I'm working with you here.

ARANDA

Now. Because I have the power.  
And you people only respect power.  
So I'm going to use that power and--

WHAM! Gibbs moves lightning fast, SLUGGING Aranda across the jaw. Aranda staggers back, Gibbs grabs his gun arm --

ON TONY, who hears the POP of a gunshot.

TONY

Hello? You there? What happened...? I need a response. I need to talk to Gibbs right now.

Beat. Borin has joined Tony. They wait. Then --

GIBBS (V.O.)

It's me, Tony. I'm fine.

ON GIBBS as he talks into the walkie. Aranda lies on the ground, a bloody nose and a bullet wound in his thigh.

GIBBS

Can't say the same for Aranda.

28 INT. NCIS AUTOPSY ROOM - DAY

28

Ducky leans over Joe Willis' body. Speaking to him --

DUCKY

It's true we all must die. I myself am not religious. But I find desecration of the human body to be positively indecent...

MCGEE'S VOICE

Pirates aren't known for their decency, Duck.

McGee breezes in on the heels of that one-liner. *And is that a coffee in his hand?* Ducky is momentarily taken aback by McGee's Gibbsian shift.

MCGEE

Something wrong?

Ducky waves it off.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

DUCKY

No, Timothy. Though I request you put your coffee down before joining me at the table.

McGee complies. Meets Ducky at the autopsy table.

MCGEE

Joe Willis drown?

DUCKY

Asphyxiation was the cause of death.

MCGEE

And the bathtub he was floating in?

DUCKY

Purely hygienic. Most likely, Mister Willis was left in the water to control odor and decomposition.

MCGEE

Can being submerged in water control decomp?

DUCKY

Not water alone. But there were traces of chemicals on the skin.  
(refers to a REPORT)  
Specifically benzethonium chloride, cetrimide and good old-fashioned ammonia... These would slow decaying of the flesh.

MCGEE

How long has he been dead?

DUCKY

Hard to be precise. I'd estimate five to seven days... The killer or killers wanted to preserve the body.

MCGEE

While they used his apartment to plan their hijacking.

McGee turns to leave.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

DUCKY

Timothy... It seems you're filling  
your boss' shoes quite well.

MCGEE

Thanks, Duck.

McGee (true to Gibbs' form) is out the door. Ducky looks  
after him. Then to Joe Willis' dead body --

DUCKY

Quite well, indeed.

29 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - TOOL SHOP - DAY

29

ANGLE ON ARANDA'S bleeding thigh as Gibbs attempts to tie a  
TOURNIQUET around it. Aranda flinches in pain.

GIBBS

Keep still.

Aranda's walkie SQUAWKS.

HIJACKER'S VOICE (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

Renaldo? *Adonde estas?* [*ah-don-de*  
*es-tahs*] (Where are you?)

Gibbs eyes the walkie. Finishes the tourniquet.

ARANDA

That's all you're gonna do?

GIBBS

Stopped the bleeding. For now.

The walkie comes to life again --

HIJACKER'S VOICE (V.O.)

(in Spanish)

*Renaldo, te hablo en serio. Estamos*  
*preocupados. Voy a buscarte. [te*  
*hab-lo en ser-io. Ehs-tah-mos preh-*  
*oh-coo-pah-dos. Voy ah boos-cart-*  
*eh.]* (Renaldo, man. I'm serious.  
We're getting worried... I'm coming  
to find you...)

ARANDA

I need medical attention.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

GIBBS

What you need is to respond to your  
friend. Tell him you're *bueno*.

Aranda considers.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (2)

29

GIBBS (cont'd)  
Or you want me to untie this?

Decision made. Aranda nods. Gibbs holds the walkie for him.

ARANDA  
(in Spanish)  
*Estoy bien quedate ayi, entiendes?*  
*[ehs-toy bee-en kay-dah-tay ah-yee,*  
*en tee-en-dehs.]* (I'm okay. Stay  
where you are. Understood?)

HIJACKER'S VOICE  
(in Spanish)  
*Entendido!* *[en-ten-dee-doh.]*  
(Understood.)

Gibbs turns off the walkie.

GIBBS  
Now you talk.

ARANDA  
I don't know--

Gibbs stops him.

GIBBS  
You told me you're the leader. The  
leader knows.

ARANDA  
Vilandro was the real leader.  
Outfitted us. Got us fake papers.

GIBBS  
The plan?

ARANDA  
Take the boat out of port. Contact  
the shipping company for ransom...  
We get our money and an escape boat  
meets us. Simple. Clean.

GIBBS  
Can't contact the shipping company  
after you destroyed the radio.

ARANDA  
Vilandro went to the radio room  
with the captain. They fought.  
Everything fell apart.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (3)

29

GIBBS

I've seen you and four others. You have another man on the ship.

Aranda shakes his head. Almost chuckling to himself --

ARANDA

You think you're in control now. Because you have me. But you're wrong. When the others--

Gibbs presses his boot into Aranda's bullet wound. Ouch!

GIBBS

The sixth man. Where is he?

ARANDA

(in agony)

Deck Four. Vilandro sent him to guard a shipping container down there. Right before he got in the fight with the captain. I don't know why... I swear!

Gibbs moves his boot off. Aranda catches his breath.

GIBBS

You were telling me who's in control...?

30 INT. ABBY'S LAB - DAY

30

Abby is on the phone. Bishop hunched over a laptop. Piles of GARBAGE from Joe Willis' apartment is spread out.

ABBY (ON PHONE)

Okay, Tony. Thanks. Stay safe. Don't get shot or anything.

(hangs up)

Gibbs is okay. He captured one of the pirates. He's going to help Tony and Borin take the ship back.

Bishop is oblivious as she continues to focus on the laptop.

ABBY (cont'd)

Hello? Earth to Ellie. Adventure on the high seas in progress.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

BISHOP

Oh. Right. Sorry, Abby. That's good news about Gibbs... It's Vilandro's computer from Joe Willis' place. Filled with encrypted e-mails...

ABBY

Anything interesting?

BISHOP

Tons. What I've decrypted so far - shipping timetables, port security codes, petty-cash drops for the hijackers. Someone planned and financed this whole operation... Just can't tell who yet.

McGee enters, a Caf-POW! in hand.

MCGEE

What do you got, Abbs?

ABBY

High hopes and a good feeling, McGee. Gibbs is free.

MCGEE

I heard. Good news. What else?

Abby does a double-take. *Who is this and where is McGee?*

ABBY

Well... I've been combing through the evidence from Joe Willis' apartment.

MCGEE

What'd the garbage tell you?

ABBY

It may look like garbage to the untrained eye, but to me every moldy food wrapper and soggy cigarette butt fills in a vast mosaic... The story of seven men locked in two small rooms for days.

MCGEE

Details, Abbs.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

30

ABBY

I can tell you that one of our hijackers is lactose intolerant. Two more are vegetarians. Another struggles with IBS--

MCGEE

(interrupting)

Fewer details, Abbs.

ABBY

Right. I'm running eight distinct DNA samples to get IDs on the hijackers. Waiting on results.

MCGEE

And the chemicals Ducky found on Joe Willis's body?

ABBY

Dead-animal deodorizer. Lot of it.

Bishop turns around.

BISHOP

My dad always had a bag of that stuff when I was growing up. Covers up the smell and stops the infestation of flies.

ABBY

Use enough of it, you can do the same for a dead man.

MCGEE

Anything else?

Abby holds up a PIECE OF PAPER with a SERIES OF NUMBERS.

ABBY

Just these numbers. Gibbs found them on a piece of paper at the crime scene on the San Dominick. Not sure what they are yet... But I'm all over it.

MCGEE

Good work, Abbs.

(CONTINUED)



30 CONTINUED: (3)

30

McGee hands her the Caf-POW! Turns to go. Abby stops him.

ABBY  
I just got chills.

MCGEE  
Why's that?

ABBY  
You. The way you've changed. In front of our eyes. Gruff manner, self-confidence. Clipped replies... You're not McGee anymore. You're...McGibbs.

MCGEE  
What? That's -- what?

Bishop joins Abby as they both regard McGee.

BISHOP  
It's true. Ever since Tony put you in charge. Like you're channeling him...

MCGEE  
Stop it.

ABBY  
You got it, Boss.

Abby and Bishop both salute as McGee heads out. He can't help but swell a little with pride.

31 INT. USS SERANO - COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

31

Tony enters to find Borin leaning over the computer as she gears up. Something's bothering her.

TONY  
MSRT is ready to move when you are.

Borin nods, half-distracted by the computer; Tony gears up too.

BORIN  
Abby got positive IDs on several of the hijackers. Doesn't add up.

She puts PHOTOS up on the computer.

TONY  
They're just kids.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

BORIN

Exactly. The matches came from the Brazilian DNA database.

TONY

So they all have criminal records.

BORIN

Car theft. Shoplifting... These aren't serious felons.

TONY

Yet someone smuggled them over the border, financed them and sent them onto the San Dominick.

BORIN

Pirates aren't sophisticated enough to falsify IDs and over-ride security systems.

TONY

These pirates were.

BORIN

We're missing something.

As Borin considers that all-too-familiar churn of her gut --

TONY

Maybe we'll find it on that boat.

Borin nods. As she follows Tony out --

32 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - MESS DECK - NIGHT

32

The Young Hijacker stands guard over the entire CREW, including Meyer.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR as Aranda comes limping in with Gibbs in tow. *It looks like Aranda has control over Gibbs again, pressing his submachine gun into Gibbs' side.* The Hijacker is surprised to see his leader and barely upright.

ARANDA

(in Spanish)

*Que esperas, ayudame! [que ehs-pe-rahs, i-e-oodah-meh.]* What are you waiting for? Help me!

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

The Young Hijacker rushes over, slings his rifles onto his shoulder to help Aranda. As he approaches, Gibbs reveals his SIG.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

GIBBS  
 (in Spanish)  
*Baja la pistola. [ba-ha la pees-tow-lah.]* (Put the weapon down.)

The Young Hijacker complies.

GIBBS (cont'd)  
 On the ground. Hands on your heads.

As the Young Hijacker follows Gibbs' orders, Meyer and the other members of the BOARDING PARTY approach. Gibbs takes the submachine gun back from Aranda: *pulls the CLIP out, revealing that it's empty.*

MEYER  
 We heard that gunshot before. We were sure you were dead.

Gibbs scans the HOSTAGES, but something's wrong--

GIBBS  
 Patricia?

MEYER  
 They took her right after Aranda grabbed you.

Gibbs looks to Aranda, who can't help but smile.

GIBBS  
 Where is she?

33 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - CREW BUNKROOM - NIGHT

33

Three Hijackers are busy rifling through the crew's personal items, stealing money, valuables, etc.

Tony and several MSRT burst in at one end of the long room.

TONY  
 Don't move! Hands in the air.

Two Hijackers comply. The third starts to run to a door at the other end of the room only to find himself face to face with Borin and her weapon.

BORIN  
 On the ground. Now!

Off which--

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

ARANDA (V.O.)  
Jaime [HY-mee]? What happened to  
you?

34 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - LOWER CARGO HOLD/CONTAINER - NIGHT 34

Gibbs leads Aranda through the shadowy cargo hold.

GIBBS  
You sent her down here to your man.

ARANDA  
My insurance policy.

GIBBS  
Show me the container he's supposed  
to be guarding.

Aranda gestures toward the CONTAINER.

NEW ANGLE INSIDE THE DARKENED CONTAINER as the door OPENS  
revealing Gibbs and Aranda.

ARANDA  
He probably got lost somewhere down  
here. But this is the container...

Gibbs looks inside. It's empty. Gibbs points to a spot.

GIBBS  
Stay.

Aranda can barely stand. Blood loss is getting to him.  
Gibbs examines the empty container.

ARANDA  
Empty, huh? What a joke.

The walkie comes to life.

TONY (V.O.)  
Boss...where are you?

GIBBS (ON WALKIE)  
Deck Four.

TONY (V.O.)  
On the way...

But Gibbs is focused on the lining of the container's walls  
and door. *It's wood.* He examines the wood closer. Knocks  
on it...HOLLOW.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

He's able to grab hold of a loose end of the wood along the door and pulls it down, revealing a HIDDEN COMPARTMENT. Also completely empty except for --

ARANDA  
*Is that a bomb?*

That's exactly what it is. Crudely designed, but big enough to take down the ship. It's got dozens of wires and a DIGITAL TIMER reading 10:00 and counting down.

GIBBS (ON WALKIE)  
Tony...

But he's interrupted by the resounding CLICK of a pistol.

Gibbs swivels fast, aiming his SIG right into the face of JAIME RIBEIRO, 20, rail-thin, with a .45 in his fist and hiding behind Felton - who's got a makeshift bandage on her head. It's a classic stand-off except --

ARANDA  
Just to be clear, that's not our  
bomb...

**Off Gibbs, between a rock and a hard place...**

**PHOOF TO BLACK.**

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**FROM BLACK:****FLASH - BLACK-AND-WHITE OF MCGEE, SPEECHLESS...****PHOOF TO BLACK:**

FROM BLACK:

35 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - LOWER CARGO HOLD - NIGHT 35

Gibbs and Jaime stand off. Felton is the only thing standing between Jaime and a bullet. Aranda is barely hanging on. The bomb's timer steadily ticks down.

GIBBS  
How you holding up, Patricia.

FELTON  
I've had better days, Sir.

JAIME  
Drop it! Now!

Not happening.

GIBBS  
Wanna tell your boy to ease up on his trigger finger?

ARANDA  
As soon as you and your people leave the ship.

GIBBS  
Turn off your bomb and we'll talk.

ARANDA  
I told you, it's not our bomb.

GIBBS  
Then whose is it?

ARANDA  
No idea. But it's going off one way or another.

GIBBS  
Not if I disarm it.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

JAIME

You can do that?

(yes)

Do it!

GIBBS

After you drop your weapon and  
release the petty officer.

ARANDA

(in Spanish)

*No le tengas confianza, Jaime. Es un federal. Los pueden mandar a Guantanamo, te gustaria eso? [No lae ten-gahs con-fee-ahn-sah, Hy-mee. Ehs oon fe-de-rah]. Lows poo-eh-den mah-n-dahr a Guantanamo, teh goos-tah-rrhea eh-sow.]* (Don't trust him, Jaime. He's a federal. They'll send us to Guantanamo. You want that?)

ANGLE ON DOORWAY where Tony and Borin arrive.

TONY

Boss. You still with us?

GIBBS

There's a bomb down here. You need to evacuate the ship.

BORIN

Already left you on this ship once. See what trouble you got into...

GIBBS

Guess it's up to you, Jaime [HY-mee].

Off Jaime, so far over his head --

36 INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM - NIGHT

36

McGee comes in on his cell. Bishop is at her desk.

MCGEE (ON PHONE)

We don't comment on active operations... Wanna call my boss? You're welcome to try...

McGee's desk phone RINGS.

(CONTINUED)



36 CONTINUED:

36

MCGEE (cont'd)

Yep. Okay. Hanging up now.

McGee hangs up his CELL. Answers his DESK PHONE.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

MCGEE (cont'd)  
Go for McGee... Dorneget? I don't  
have any updates. Tony and Borin  
took the ship. Haven't heard back.

Gibbs' phone RINGS now. Bishop is oblivious to it.

MCGEE (cont'd)  
Gotta go, Ned.

McGee hangs up. Heads over to Gibbs' phone. Answers.

MCGEE (cont'd)  
Didn't waste time going over my --  
Director Vance? Sorry. Thought  
you were... Never mind. No, Sir,  
nothing new... I will.

The phones continue to RING. Bishop continues to ignore it.

MCGEE (cont'd)  
Hey, Bishop. Phone's ringing.  
(no answer)  
Bishop?!

Bishop turns around, earbuds in. Pulls them out.

BISHOP  
You say something?

MCGEE  
Yeah...whattya got?

BISHOP  
Ran a trace on these encrypted e-  
mails. They were buried in a  
Trojan horse that bounced all over  
the country through infected host  
computers... I pinpointed the  
origin. A Kinkos outside Norfolk.

MCGEE  
Our mastermind is local.

McGee stays standing behind Gibbs' desk as he considers.

BISHOP  
They have dozens of customers  
renting computer time by the hour.  
We'll need more if we want to zero  
in on a suspect.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (3)

36

Abby comes in fast from the elevator --

ABBY

I know what the number means. I  
know what the number means. I--  
(but then)  
McGee! What are you doing?

MCGEE

I'm -- what? I'm standing.

ABBY

At Gibbs' desk. What's gotten into  
you?

McGee doesn't know what to say.

BISHOP

Abby. You said you know what the  
number means. What number?

ABBY

One Gibbs found at the crime scene.  
Thought it might be a lottery  
number or coordinates. But I was  
wrong... And also kinda right.

MCGEE

Explain.

Abby goes to McGee's computer. Works the keyboard, bringing  
up the numbers on the SCREEN.

ABBY

It's a locator number. For a  
shipping container from the San  
Dominick.

MCGEE

What's inside?

ABBY

A metric ton of multi-colored yarn.

Not what anyone was expecting.

BISHOP

Is it...valuable yarn?

ABBY

Two dollars a yard. About average.  
(but)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (4)

36

ABBY (cont'd)

It's not what's in the container,  
but who the container belongs to.

(brings it up on plasma)

Company called LCD Liquidated.  
They have a cursory website, an  
answering machine and about fifty  
containers that travel around the  
world almost constantly.

Shipping routes appear on the PLASMA. Bishop looks.

BISHOP

Usually export out of the U.S...

MCGEE

And end up in countries with  
secretive banking practices.

ABBY

And they're currently under  
investigation by ICE for money  
smuggling. Drug money,  
specifically. Talking tens of  
millions hidden in one container.

BISHOP

This isn't about ransom at all.

MCGEE

Rule Seventy. Keep digging 'til  
you hit the bottom.

He reaches for the phone. Abby stops him.

ABBY

McGee. There is no Rule Seventy.

MCGEE

I--

ABBY

You just made up a rule.

(then)

Being McGibbs is going to your  
head. I don't even recognize you  
right now.

Abby backs out --

37 OMITTED 37 \*

38 INT. THE SAN DOMINICK - LOWER CARGO HOLD - NIGHT 38

Gibbs continues to face off with Jaime, who can barely contain his fear. Aranda bleeds steadily onto the floor.

GIBBS  
You're scared. Means your smart...

ARANDA  
Smart man wouldn't be here.

Tony and Borin arrive on the other end of the container.

TONY  
Got you covered, Boss.

Jaime backs up, his gun pointed and Felton in his grip.

BORIN  
How's that timer looking?

GIBBS  
(eyes the timer)  
Three minutes.

TONY  
Just spoke to McGee. He says this empty container was supposed to be filled with drug money. \*

Aranda starts laughing.

GIBBS  
Where's the money?

JAIME  
Container was empty when I got here.

38 CONTINUED:

38

BORIN

Millions of dollars don't just walk off.

ARANDA

The only thing we wanted was ransom. Then the escape boat comes and we go home...

GIBBS

'Simple. Clean.' Already told that story.

But it's news to Borin --

BORIN

You said you didn't want a boat.  
(now it makes sense)  
You were expecting one.

ARANDA

Yes. And it will be here soon.

BORIN

One of our agents found the operational plans for this hijacking. Here's the thing, not one word about an escape boat.

ARANDA

What are you saying?

GIBBS

(gets it)  
There is no boat. You weren't supposed to get away. You were set up to take a fall on this ship.

BORIN

Knew this wasn't a typical hijacking. It was a set-up... Steal tens of millions of cartel money, they come after you.

\*  
\*

TONY

But not if you're already dead... That's what the bomb was for. It's like *Die Hard* on a ship!

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

GIBBS  
(to Jaime)  
You were played for a fool. It's  
time to end this.

But Jaime is like a cornered animal. He will not give.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (3)

38

ARANDA

(seeing the light)  
Jaime, listen to him. There's no  
boat. No way out... You need to  
give up.

JAIME

No!

FELTON

Shoot him, Sir. I'll take my  
chances.

GIBBS

You got it.

JAIME

Everybody shut up!

TONY

Running out of time, Boss.

The TIMER'S down to under thirty seconds--

GIBBS

Two choices, Jaime. Put down the  
weapon, and I diffuse the bomb, or  
I shoot you, and I diffuse the  
bomb...

Beat. Jaime realizes he's screwed. Lowers the gun. Tony  
and Borin secure him and Aranda as Felton braces herself  
against the wall and Gibbs...stands still.

The timer keeps ticking down...15, 14, 13...

TONY

Uh...Boss?

ARANDA

What are you doing? Defuse it!

7, 6, 5...

JAIME

Please!

3,2,1... NOTHING HAPPENS. Everyone breathes a sigh of  
relief. Except Gibbs, who wasn't worried. He reveals a wire  
in his hand.

(CONTINUED)



38 CONTINUED: (4)

38

TONY

You removed that when you first saw  
the bomb, didn't you?

Gibbs shrugs as Borin reaches for her WALKIE.

BORIN (ON WALKIE)

This is Borin. The San Dominick is  
secure. Coming up with two more  
prisoners and a guardsman who needs  
medical attention.

Tony joins Gibbs, who stares at the empty compartment.

GIBBS

Money was never on the ship.  
Someone already took it off...

TONY

That bit with the bomb. That was  
fun. Might clue us in next time.  
Just a suggestion, because...

But Tony notices something in the corner of the container.  
Pulls his flashlight. Aims it at what looks like a small wet  
PILE of brown dirt.

GIBBS

Whattya got?

TONY

Bad habit...

39 EXT. INDUSTRIAL PARKING LOT/INT. PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT

39

ANGLE ON THE TARP-COVERED BED OF A PICK-UP TRUCK. A HAND  
comes into frame and pulls up the tarp, revealing stack upon  
stack of HUNDRED-DOLLAR BILLS. The tarp is put back in  
place.

REVEAL O'Rourke limping carefully to the truck's door. He  
gets in. Starts the ignition. KNOCK...KNOCK...

O'Rourke looks up to see Tony standing at the passenger side.  
He's got a package of OLD PELTON CHEWING TOBACCO. He opens  
the door. Sits next to O'Rourke.

TONY

Brought this to the hospital this  
morning. Couldn't find you.  
(re the tobacco)  
Old Pelton, right?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

O'ROURKE  
That's my brand...

TONY  
Matched it off your spit in the  
shipping container. Right next to  
the bomb you rigged. Got DNA, too.

O'Rourke casually moves to put the tobacco in his pocket.

O'ROURKE  
Don't know what you're--

BORIN'S VOICE  
Hands on the wheel.

O'Rourke turns to find Borin at the driver's side with her  
weapon pointed at him. He complies. Tony proceeds to search  
him for weapons. Finds a PISTOL.

BORIN  
Clever guy, Captain. Planned a  
hijacking as a distraction while  
you robbed the cartels... Almost  
didn't catch you.

TONY  
Only we got security footage of you  
buying a thousand dollars worth of  
dead-animal deodorizer...

BORIN  
...two blocks from the Kinkos where  
you sent encrypted e-mails to the  
*gang that couldn't shoot straight.*

TONY  
You dream this up with your pal  
Vilandro when he held you hostage?

BORIN  
Or was he the brains? The Butch to  
your Sundance?

TONY  
Only Sundance doesn't drown Butch  
during a knife fight, does he?  
Wouldn't treat his friend like  
that.

O'Rourke reacts--

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

O'ROURKE  
He wasn't my friend.

BORIN  
Just a business partner.

O'Rourke clams. Tony looks to Borin.

TONY  
We're not getting through.

BORIN  
I'm sure the cartel's people will  
be far more persuasive.

TONY  
I hear they do this new thing with  
a scalpel and two rabid ferrets...

O'Rourke reacts. Loosening his lips to make a point --

O'ROURKE  
That bastard tortured me for ten  
days, made me beg for my life...  
Humiliated me... and somehow believed  
I was going into *business* with him...  
I just needed him to set up the  
hijacking.

BORIN  
You always planned to kill him.

O'ROURKE  
He figured out that I'd taken the  
money off the container before we  
even left port. He was angry.

TONY  
He came after you, you killed him.

O'ROURKE  
He got what he deserved.

BORIN  
So will you.

Off O'Rourke knowing how screwed he is --

40 INT. NCIS SQUAD ROOM - NIGHT

40

ON THE REAR ELEVATOR as it opens. Borin exits to find Tony.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

TONY

Still here, Borin? Admit it, I'm growing on you.

BORIN

Like a barnacle, Tony... Just transferring O'Rourke to Federal Detention, then I'm gone.

TONY

Good working with you.

Borin nods, then --

BORIN

Ever wanna make a change, there's always room for you on my team.

TONY

And be your number two?

BORIN

Omagi's my number two. You'd make a solid number three, though.

And off Borin goes... As Tony heads to the BULLPEN, where McGee and Bishop are at their desks.

TONY

Hey, McGee. You didn't blow anything up or cause any incidents.  
(then, sincere)  
You'll make a good boss someday.

MCGEE

Thanks...

Bishop approaches McGee's desk with her COAT on.

BISHOP

I watched *Star Trek Two* last night... Kobayashi Maru [ko-bee-AH-shee mah-roo]. Totally get it now. I figured out how Gibbs passed the boarding exercise... *He fixed it.* Like Captain Kirk.  
(then)  
I'm going to ask him tomorrow.

Tony and McGee share a look.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

TONY

You're going to accuse the boss of  
cheating on an official test?

BISHOP

(less sure)

Sounded better in my head.

TONY

This is what happens when I'm gone  
for a couple days...

(grabs his stuff)

Walk with me, Bishop.

Off they go to the elevator. Beat. McGee eyes Gibbs' empty  
desk. Looks around. He's alone. Walks over to Gibbs'  
chair. Sits. *Feels the power.* Beat. Feels something else--

MCGEE

Boss? That you?

ANGLE ON GIBBS, who's standing right behind him.

GIBBS

Rule Seventy, McGee?

**Off McGee, wide-eyed and speechless...**

**PHOOF TO BLACK.**

END OF SHOW