Season 28 Finale, Episode 9, Part 1

“To Become A Man”

(scene opens in the Gordon House, Gibbs and Danny in the garage, morning, both placing camping items into the bed of Gibbs’s pickup truck. Caprice standing to the side, arms crossed, frowning)

Caprice: “Jethro...you know I’ve got problems with this, right?”

(Gibbs looks at Danny, shrugs...Danny looks at Caprice, shrugs)

Caprice: “It’s too soon after Gitmo”

(Gibbs stops loading...walks to Caprice..Her face softens as he gets closer. His voice drops to a whisper)

Gibbs: “Hey...I know you’re worried. Heck, honey, I’m worried...but I promised Danny..I can’t go back on that promise”

(Caprice looks over at Danny, happily doing his best to put a folded up cook stove on the folded down tailgate of the truck)

Caprice: “I know...but he’d understand....your leg..your head..”

Gibbs :”Ribs, eye...yea...I know”

(Gibbs pauses, looks back at Danny....he’s finally managed to get the cook stove on the tail gate, balancing it on the top of his crutches..Caprice calls out to Danny...)

Caprice: “Danny...honey.....don’t you worry about your dad’s.....”

Danny: “leg, head, ribs, eye....”

(Caprice looks at him in surprise)

Danny: “I can’t walk good, mom...but I hear great.....”

(Danny pushes the cook stove onto the bed of the truck...he turns to Caprice)

Danny: ‘Mom...I promise...I’ll do most of the work...I’ve set the tent up a hundred times in the back yard...I got this....”

(Caprice turns back to Gibbs....)

Caprice: “He’s really looking forward to this...”

Gibbs; “Yea...I know”

(She picks at the top button on his flannel shirt)

Caprice: “You promise you’ll be careful....okay?”

(He kisses Caprice on the cheek...)

Gibbs: “Yea...I promise...but you need to tell me the same thing...”

(She looks at him curiously)

Caprice: “I’m going to the ranch...what kind of trouble could I get into....”

Gibbs: ‘You’re a trouble magnet, McGibbs....”

(Her face shows shock)

Caprice: “Jethro Gibbs! How can you say that?”

Gibbs: “Ziva’s going to teach you how to use a pistol....You and pistols....”

(Huffily)

Caprice: “I promise not to shoot myself....butthead...”

Gibbs: “Heck, McGibbs...I’m more worried that you’ll shoot Ziva!”

Caprice: “You don’t stop making fun of me, I might shoot you!”

(Gibbs grins....)

Gibbs; “You’d miss”

(She scowls..)

Caprice: “Get!...You boys get!...Go do your guy thing!”

(Gibbs kisses her on the cheek, small grin..turns towards Danny...then stops)

Caprice: “Come back....”

Gibbs: “I was already on my way, honey....”

Danny: “Here it comes....the yuckfest....”

(Gibbs kisses Caprice....embraces her....then they part...)

Caprice: “Please, Jethro...be careful....I’m getting too used to seeing you in a hospital bed...”

Gibbs: “Scout’s honor....I’ll be careful...”

(Caprice looks over at Danny....one eyebrow goes up....Danny scowls....then...)

Danny: “Ok mom....I guess.....”

(Caprice moves to him, embraces him tightly....)

Caprice: “You take care of your dad now...hear me?”

(Still embracing, she feels Danny nod his head against her stomach)

Danny: “I promise mom....”

Gibbs: “Hey....we’re going camping....what could happen?”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at Ranger station of Shenandoah National Park, west of D.C., the Appalachian Mountains seen over the roof of the Ranger Station. Gibbs parks the truck, he and Danny get out, enter the brick and glass building, entering into the large, pine paneled room, then to the Visitors desk....An older man at another desk sees them.....)

Man: “Agent Gibbs...good to see you made it”

(Gibbs looks...gives small grin....)

Gibbs: “Rodney? I thought you’d retired!”

Rodney: ”What the hell would I do that for? I got a few good years left in me!”

(Gibbs looks at the old man, shakes his head....)

Gibbs: “Didn’t the doc tell you to take it easy?”

Rodney: “What the hell do they know?”

(Gibbs shrugs)

Gibbs: “A lot?”

(Rodney scowls..)

Rodney: “That’s their problem...they know too much....and they know it....damn know it alls...”

Gibbs: “You might want to listen to him, Rodney....”

(Rodney frowns....then avoiding the conversation...)

Rodney: “I’ve got the jeep ready, if you’re ready”

(Gibbs looks at the man...then...)

Gibbs: ‘Yea...I’ll sign us in, then we can unload onto yours”

(Rodney sits...clicky clacks on PC....looks at Gibbs)

Rodney: “Just making sure you know.....We’ve re-opened the Ridge Pass area....If you’re looking for the prettiest place, and no one around you....I can put you up there”

(Gibbs looks at Rodney.....then..)

Gibbs: “Be a little hard for my son to move around...”

Rodney: “There’s one site that’s flat as pancake....big area, and...”

(Rodney gives Gibbs a small smile...)

Rodney: “There’s a rock ridge that juts out north of the site...blocks the cell tower signal....”

(Gibbs stares for a moment....then...)

Gibbs: “No cell signal....”

(Danny looks at Gibbs...fear begins to creep onto his face)

Gibbs “No cell means no games on a phone”

(Danny starts to panic...Gibbs stares at Rodney for a few moments....then...)

Gibbs: “We’ll take it”

(Rodney begins entering the information on the PC...then he stands, looks out the windows at Gibbs's truck....)

Gibbs: "Help you, Rodney?"

Rodney: "Nope...just checkin'..."

Gibbs; "On what?"

(Rodney looks at Gibbs...shakes his head..)

Rodney: "Last time one of you fellas came this way, you let loose a B.A. mountain lion!"

(Gibbs looks at Rodney curiously)

Gibbs; "B.A.?"

Danny: "Big Ass"

(Gibbs looks at Danny....cocks his head...)

Danny: "Sorry dad...Sorry sir...."

Rodney: "It's okay, son...but yea...that's what it meant....That big cat created quite a ruckus before it left...Never did know where that cat went"

(Gibbs and Danny look at each other, private smiles exchanged)

(scene shifts to The D Ranch, Caprice and Ziva sitting at the kitchen table, Dez sitting also, watching....)

Ziva: "Caprice....please describe the difficulty you are having..."

(Caprice's eyes get big.....she shrugs...)

Caprice: "I shoot everything except what I'm shooting at"

(Dez starts to smile, starts nodding her head...Caprice looks at her, frowns)

Ziva: "Do you feel you know the reason for this?"

(Caprice shakes her head.....Dez starts nodding, smiling. Caprice looks at Dez again, frowns again)

Ziva: "Possibly, you simply need practice?"

(Dez shakes her head....Caprice nods hers....Ziva looks at Dez...)

Ziva: “Destiny..perhaps you could offer some wisdom?”

(Dez smiles bigger...)

Dez: “She’s scared to death of the big boom!”

(Ziva looks at Dez, curiously...then at Caprice...Caprice shrugs...nods her head)

Caprice: “Pretty much....”

Ziva: ‘But you are proving yourself proficient with a shotgun? They have much bigger....”

Dez: “Booms”

Ziva: “Yes...booms...”

Caprice: “It’s not so close.....So...”

Ziva: “Ah! It is not the boom...it is the proximity of the....”

Dez: “Boom”

Ziva:”So...when you fire a pistol....what is it that happens....”

(Dez starts laughing....Caprice looks at her....)

Caprice: “Stop making fun of me!...It scares the pee outa me!...”

Dez: “And she starts shooting everywhere....You gotta be quick.....find cover....”

(Ziva thinks....then...)

Ziva; ‘Caprice....when you react....after the....”

Dez: “Boom”

Ziva: “Yes...after the boom....if you can think back....Do you have your eyes open?”

(Dez starts laughing....Caprice starts shaking her head....)

Caprice: “I’m scared to open them! And my hand....it just keeps pulling the trigger! Ziva...It’s awful!...”

(Ziva leans back....crosses her arms over her chest....then nods)

Ziva: 'I believe I can help you"

Dez: "Oh lord...."

Caprice; "Seriously? Maybe quick? So when Jethro gets back, I could show him?"

Ziva: "Yes...I am certain...."

Dez: "Oh lord...."

(Ziva and Caprice both look at Dez....)

Dez: "One piece of advice, Ziva...."

Ziva: "Yes..of course, Destiny...what is that?"

(Dez looks at Caprice, then at Ziva....)

Dez: "Wear a vest"

Ziva: "Destiny, I am quite sure I am aware enough to not need any kind of protective vest...."

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at Shenandoah Park, Gibbs in passenger seat of park Jeep, no top, Rodney driving, Danny in back seat. Camping gear is in the truck bed compartment of the jeep. The Jeep is driving on dirt and rock road, tall trees on both sides, the road getting steeper and steeper as they drive)

Gibbs: "Steep"

Rodney: "Yep"

Gibbs: "I don't see anyone else"

Rodney: "Just re-opened the area. No one else expected up here till next weekend...hold on...."

(The jeep slows as it comes up on a washed out area of the road...a dip in the road is obvious....the jeep slows, the 4 wheel drive digging in)

Rodney: “Johnson Creek....It rained up in the West Ridge yesterday...big storm...water ran down the mountainside, Johnson Creek overflowed....The overflow came this way, washed out this part of the road”

(Gibbs look out the side of the Jeep, sees 12-15ft drop off...then the jeep starts to slide in the loose dirt and mud....he corrects the jeep, then they start back on firm road...Gibbs notices the man breathing hard...)

Rodney: “Bad place....but we’re on solid ground now...”

(Gibbs notices a road branching off directly on the new side of the road...)

Gibbs: “Where does that road go to?”

Rodney: “It’s the alternate route if this pass gets washed out....We could have taken it, but it’s 6 miles of up and down, around the lake, then back to the station...This road saved us about an hour of drive time”

(scene shifts to top of the ridge....the jeep comes to a flat rock area....large, open...high cliff on one side, trees on the edge, then a rugged patch of forest in front....Gibbs looks back at Danny...the boy is looking out over the area, wide eyed...)

Danny: “Dad!...Look!”

(Danny points to one area....the drop off is so steep, only the tops of 100 foot trees can be seen...past the trees, a view of the entire valley can be seen....trees, a lake, huge rocks, and more....)

Danny: “Oh my god.....”

(Danny continues to stare in amazement at the sight....)

Gibbs: “Glad you like it, son...”

Danny: “Like it? Dad...it’s ….it’s....It’s so big!”

Gibbs; “Yea...and it’s our front porch for the weekend...”

(Danny looks at Gibbs....smiles...)

Danny: “Best front porch ever!”

(Rodney points at an area at the bottom of the valley....)

Rodney: “See the green rooftop on that one building at the bottom of the valley?”

(Danny looks off....searches....)

Danny: “You mean that one about a hundred miles away?”

(Rodney chuckles...)

Rodney: “That’s the ranger station....not quite 100 miles away, but as the crow flies, only 6 miles”

Danny: ‘Crows fly it?”

Rodney: “Just an expression son...it means if you were to walk it in a straight line, it’s only 6 miles...”

(They all look at the drop off that is about 50 yards from their campsite)

Danny: “Uh...no thank you, sir....”

Rodney: “Take a hell of a man to make that walk....rough country between here and there...”

Gibbs: “We’ll wait for you to pick us up, Rodney....and pass on the walking”

(Gibbs, Danny, and Rodney exit the Jeep, begin unloading the camp gear....)

Danny: “HEY DAD!”

(Gibbs looks over at his son....Danny is looking back at him...)

Danny: “Best Dad Son weekend ever!”

(Gibbs smiles....)

Gibbs: “Yea....we’ll make it the best ever, son...”

Rodney: “Okay, you’re all unloaded...I’ll be back here day after tomorrow, sometime around noon...You men take care....remember...no cell signal here...”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at The D Ranch, Ziva and Caprice at the ranch pistol range. Several long wooden tables set up, dirt hills downrange, approximately 50 feet, a second

set of small hills further, at 100 feet. Wooden targets are set up on several of the hills, all with the outline of a human being)

Caprice: “They are so far away!”

(Ziva pulls a set of binoculars out of her backpack, hands them to Caprice...)

Ziva: “100 foot target...first row....”

(Ziva pull her pistol out, aims quickly, then fires three rounds....Caprice looks through the binoculars...then, open mouthed, looks at Ziva)

Caprice; “All three shots hit the head!”

(Ziva nods)

Ziva: “Yes...it is the quickest way to deter a threat”

Caprice; “Deter? You shot his head off!”

Ziva: “Yes...it would seem so...”

Caprice: “I’ll be happy if I shoot his foot!”

Ziva: “We will work on that, I assure you...shooting the foot can stop an advancing enemy without killing him....It is effective, as well....”

(Caprice stares at Ziva for a moment...)

Caprice; ‘I was joking...”

(Ziva looks at the target...then back at Caprice)

Ziva: “I was not....Now...I have placed the safety on...there are 5 bullets left in the clip....”

(Ziva hands the pistol to Caprice..)

Ziva: “Show me how you hold the gun....”

(scene shifts to campsite....large tent is up, gear stacked neatly to the side, tarp covering the extra gear. Gibbs seen out in front of the tent, a circle of rocks constructed, small kindling in the middle...To the side of the fire pit, the cook stove sits, still folded up. An ice chest sits beside the cookstove....Danny comes

out of the tent, looks at the campfire area, sees Gibbs placing a metal grill over some rocks...and smiles...)

Danny: “T-bones over the fire?”

Gibbs; “Yea...what else?”

(Danny looks again over the drop off....eyes get wide again...)

Danny: “DAD! We can see down on clouds!”

(Gibbs stands, looks...sees the top of clouds off to the west, dark....)

Gibbs; “They’ll get some rain down there”

Danny: ”But not up here?”

Gibbs; “No...we’re above the lower cloud cover here...you’re looking down on a rainstorm, son”

Danny: “NO WAY!”

(Gibbs watches his son, taking in the amazement on the young boy's face....He watches as Danny maneuvers his crutches on the flat rock, heading towards the edge of their site)

Gibbs: “Not too close son...”

(Danny stops...looks over the treetops....)

Danny: “You think Mr. Rodney’s okay?”

(Gibbs looks off at the road they came up on ….)

Gibbs: “Hope so son....that washout didn’t look like it could take much more...”

(scene shifts to deep woods...The lights on the tail end of a jeep can be seen in the space between two trees...the scene shows the driver...Rodney raises his head up, looks around for a moment, his hand still on his heart...then his eyes close again, he slumps sideways across the console of the jeep..)

Rodney: “Damn doc outsmarted me.....”

(His eyes close, then he loses consciousness)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at The D Ranch, Caprice taking the proper stance, holding the pistol in both hands, aiming it down range at the target....)

Ziva; “Good...proper stance, correct arm position...now...move your thumb up and push the safety lever....”

(Caprice slowly moves her thumb up, flips the safety lever..)

Ziva: “Now...gently squeeze...”

(The gun roars, Caprice squealing, closing her eyes, her fingers repeatedly pulling the trigger as she attempts to point the gun away from her, her head turned away from the pistol...bullets hit the dirt at her feet, hit the table.....)

Caprice: “OH MY GOD!”

(Ziva has hit the ground, rolled under a table, her hands covering her head....She hears the click of the hammer on an empty chamber.....Caprice opens her eyes....looks around....)

Caprice: “Ziva....are you still alive?”

(Ziva is seen under the table, furiously texting Dez....)

Bring me a vest!

(The honk of the ranch jeep is heard...Ziva looks up in the direction of the jeep, sees the vehicle...Dez is parked behind them, a smirk on her face, holding up a bullet-proof vest....)

Dez: “Told you so”

(scene shifts to campsite...Gibbs and Danny seen leaning back in fold out chairs, both silent....both holding their stomachs...)

Danny: “I didn’t think I could eat two steaks”

Gibbs: ‘Air up here give you an appetite”

Danny: “They were good dad...best steaks ever”

Gibbs: “Somehow son, food tastes better when your outside...”

(Danny nods....then gets his crutches from the side of the chair)

Danny: “Going inside to blow the air mattresses up...”

Gibbs; “I put the pump just inside the zipper....”

Danny: “Good thing, dad...if I had to blow them up the old way, the mattresses would be full of steak burp”

(Gibbs chuckles....shakes his head....watches again as Danny makes his way towards the tent, one crutch at a time...He whispers to himself...)

Gibbs: “Got a good boy there....good friend, too”

(Danny seen unzipping the tent door, entering the tent....Gibbs stands, stretches....looks out over the valley...out loud...)

Gibbs: “About 2 hours till dark....Get the food up Gibbs...hang it....do your job...”

(Gibbs starts to walk towards the gear, then pulls out a large plastic bag...He places the leftover food in it, then ties a thin rope around the bag...he walks to a tree on the far side of the campsite, throws the rope over a high limb, then pulls the bag upwards until it’s 10 feet off the ground...he ties the rope off, pulls on the knot, then turns to walk back towards the tent....A clash of thunder from the storm below them startles him as he’s walking...his weakened leg gives out as he turns, then he stumbles....He falls...his ribs hitting a group of rocks coming out of the ground, and he hears the brittle sound of his ribs....)

Gibbs: “God no.....”

(Gibbs seen laying on the rocky ground, rolling over onto his back, trying to breathe...each breath hurts, the pain showing on his face....He lays there for a moment, then tries to roll over to get his feet under him.....)

Danny: “DAD!”

(Danny seen coming out of the tent, his face in fear as he sees Gibbs on the ground, laying still...Danny screams)

Danny: “DAD!”

(Danny moves as fast as his crutches will carry him....He reaches Gibbs, tosses his crutches off his arms, and kneels by his father....)

Gibbs: “I’m sorry....I’m so sorry son.....”

Danny: “WHAT DO I DO?..DAD!”

(Gibbs groans....tries to roll over again....then..)

Gibbs: “Help me....help get me into the tent....gotta.....(takes a labored breath) “ Gotta lay down....”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at The D Ranch....Caprice standing...pistol in hand....aiming again...Ziva is seen standing behind her...Dez stands behind Ziva...way behind....)

Ziva: “Now...we will try this again....”

Caprice; “ZIVA!..I don’t want to hurt anyone!”

Ziva: “There is only one bullet in the gun, Caprice...after you fire it, you may pull the trigger to your heart’s content....”

Caprice: “Ok...that’s cool...”

Dez: “I’m still ducking”

Caprice: “DESTINY!..STOP MAKING FUN....”

(As Caprice turns towards Dez, the gun fires....wood chips fly off the table in front of her....Caprice looks at it, wide eyed....then at Dez,…)

Caprice; “...of me....”

(Dez is doubled over, laughing....Ziva shakes her head....)

Ziva: “I am quite sure this is in your mind, Caprice....We know you are adept with the shotgun....”

(Ziva looks back at Dez....Dez starts shaking her head....)

Dez: “Oh no...not my gun.....”

Ziva; “Destiny....please give me your rifle....”

(Dez turns...walks towards the jeep)

Dez; “Great...now she can kill something farther off....”

(Dez returns...hands Ziva her shooting rifle, scoped...)

Dez: “5 rounds in the clip, one already in the chamber...sighted in at 600 yards”

(Ziva takes the gun....hands it to Caprice....)

Ziva: “Have you shot a rifle before, Caprice?”

(Caprice looks at the gun...shakes her head...)

Caprice: “No...but I like that the end of the barrel is a long way off....the, you know....the...”

Dez: “Boom”

Caprice: “Yea...the boom won’t scare me...”

(Ziva points towards a target far off)

Ziva: “Shoot that target”

(Caprice looks off...then back at Ziva....)

Caprice; “NO WAY! It’s a mile away!”

Ziva: “No..it’s only 500 yards away....now...”

(Ziva rests a small sandbag on the table...)

Ziva; “Rest the barrel on that bag...it will steady the rifle...”

(Caprice does as told...she places the rifle in the correct shooting position...Ziva adjusts Caprice’s elbows, then...)

Ziva: ‘You want to shoot with both eyes open....this allows your eyes to see the entire field in front of you...this relaxes the mind more..now...place the bullseye in the center of the crosshairs on the scope....”

(Caprice waits...she breathes....Ziva looks back at Dez, both surprised....then they watch as Caprice lets out a breath, and before the breath is expended, she gently pulls the trigger....The gun fires....)

Ziva: “Excellent! Excellent Caprice!”

(Caprice stands from the kneeling position....looks at Ziva....wide eyes...)

Caprice; “Did I hit it? Did I hit it?”

Ziva: “Caprice, at this point, that is not important....that is a difficult shot, and we are working on technique..We will practice, then....”

Dez; “Uh...Ziva....”

(Ziva looks back at Dez...Dez is looking through the binoculars at the target..she hands the field glasses to Ziva, who then looks at the target through them....her eyes get wide...she looks at Caprice...)

Ziva; “Caprice...Look!”

(Caprice takes the glasses...looks...the view shows the target through the binoculars...her shot has landed only a foot away from the bullseye)

Caprice; “I HIT IT! I HIT IT!”

(Ziva looks at Caprice....then...)

Ziva: “Do it again....”

(scene shifts to Gibbs in tent, laying on an inflated air mattress..his eyes open, face pale...Danny kneels by him, fearful)

Danny: “Dad...talk to me....tell me what to do.....”

(Gibbs takes a breath....then...)

Gibbs: “Just...let me.....rest, son....I’ll be....okay....”

(Danny looks at his father...Gibbs begins to cough....he covers his mouth with his hand....)

Gibbs: “That hurt...damn....”

(Gibbs takes his hand away from his mouth...Danny stares at the hand....the fingers are covered with blood from the cough.....)

Danny: “Dad...you’re bleeding inside....”

(Gibbs looks at the hand....closes his eyes....)

Gibbs; “Try the phones.....”

Danny: “I have...they don’t get a signal...Dad...I stopped getting a signal before we came to that part of the road that was washed out...”

(Gibbs nods...tries to roll over...moans...coughs again...more blood...he lays back down on the mattress....)

Gibbs; “We wait son....we wait for Mr. Rodney to come back....”

Danny: “Dad..that’s two days from now...!”

(Gibbs nods....)

Gibbs: “I know....we don’t have.....a.....choice.....”

(Danny pulls his crutches from the floor of the tent...he stands...)

Gibbs: “Son...what are you ……doing...”

Danny: “Just looking at something, dad...don’t go anywhere...I’ll be right back....”

(Danny moves slowly out of the tent....)

Gibbs: “Okay...I’m not.....(cough) “...going...anywhere.....”

(scene shows Danny moving towards the edge of the campsite...he sees the drop off...he looks over at the road they came up on....then he looks back at the tent....)

(scene shifts to inside the tent...Gibbs lying down, turns head towards Danny....)

Gibbs: ‘Son...what...”

(Danny is seen strapping on his backpack....he looks at his father...and with a firm face...)

Danny: ‘I have to go get help”

(Gibbs's face firms up...)

Gibbs: "No...you will not!..."

Danny: "Dad...wipe your mouth....then look at your hand...."

(Gibbs stares for a moment....then he wipes his mouth...blood is smeared on his fingers...Danny kneels by Gibbs)

Danny: "Dad...you won't last...."

Gibbs: "Son...I'll make it...."

Danny: "I watched my mother shoot my father...And I did nothing....."

(Danny stands...)

Danny: "I'm not going to stand by again....I'm not going to lose the best dad I've ever had.....that any boy could have"

(Danny turns his face.....then he hears Gibbs....soft...)

Gibbs: "Son...come here...."

(Danny looks at Gibbs....)

Danny: "Please don't be mad...."

Gibbs: "I'm not mad....come here..."

(Danny kneels again....)

Gibbs; "You stay on that road....remember what Mr. Rodney said....Don't go into those woods..."

(Danny nods...)

Danny: "I won't..."

Gibbs: "There are two more flashlights in my backpack...take them....I've got one in here...."

(Danny stands....)

Gibbs: "I love you, son..."

Danny: "I love you too, dad..."

Gibbs: “I know you’re scared....”

(Danny shakes his head...)

Danny: “More scared of losing you than those woods...”

(Gibbs stares at the boy..)

Gibbs: “A man never had a better son”

Danny: “A son never had a better dad....dad...I have to go....It’s going to be dark soon...”

(scene shifts to Danny leaving the campsite....his crutches moving, one ahead of the other, as the young boy wipes tears out of his wide, fearful eyes....)

(scene shifts to Gibbs, alone in the tent...whispering out loud...he closes his eyes..)

Gibbs: “I’ve never talked to you much....but...I need your help...please...protect my son....”

(Scene shifts to The D Ranch...Caprice, Dez, Ziva, and Cal, sitting at the kitchen table...laughing....Cal gets up, walks out onto the back patio...Dez, curious, follows)

Dez: ”Cal..honey...?”

(Cal is seen looking off to the West...)

Cal: “Something is wrong....”

Dez: “Cal..what?”

(Cal closes his eyes....then...in a whisper)

Cal: “Something is wrong”

(scene fades to black and white)

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE SEASON 29 PREMIER!

Season 29 Premiere!

Episode 1, Part 2, of -

“To Become A Man”

In Last Season’s Finale, We Saw...

(scene opens inside the tent...Gibbs lying down on his back, turns head towards Danny....)

Gibbs: ‘Son...what...”

(Danny is seen strapping on his backpack....he looks at his father...and with a firm face...)

Danny: ‘I have to go get help”

(Gibbs’s face firms up...)

Gibbs: “No...you will not!...”

Danny: “Dad...wipe your mouth....then look at your hand....”

(Gibbs stares for a moment....then he wipes his mouth...blood is smeared on his fingers...Danny kneels by Gibbs)

Danny: “Dad...you won’t last....”

Gibbs: “Son...I’ll make it....”

Danny: “I watched my mother shoot my father...And I did nothing.....”

(Danny stands...)

Danny: “I’m not going to stand by again....I’m not going to lose the best dad I’ve ever had.....that any boy could have”

(Danny turns his face.....then he hears Gibbs....soft...)

Gibbs: “Son...come here....”

(Danny looks at Gibbs....)

Danny: “Please don’t be mad....”

Gibbs: “I’m not mad....come here...”

(Danny kneels again....)

Gibbs; “You stay on that road....remember what Mr. Rodney said....Don’t go into those woods...”

(Danny nods...)

Danny: “I won’t...”

Gibbs: “There are two more flashlights in my backpack...take them....I’ve got one in here....”

(Danny stands....)

Gibbs: “I love you, son...”

Danny: “I love you too, dad...”

Gibbs: “I know you’re scared....”

(Danny shakes his head...)

Danny: “More scared of losing you than those woods...”

(Gibbs stares at the boy..)

Gibbs: “A man never had a better son”

Danny: “A son never had a better dad....dad...I have to go....It’s going to be dark soon...”

(scene shifts to Danny leaving the campsite....his crutches moving, one ahead of the other, as the young boy wipes tears out of his wide, fearful eyes....)

(scene shifts to Gibbs, alone in the tent...whispering out loud...he closes his eyes..)

Gibbs: “I’ve never talked to you much....but...I need your help...please...protect my son....”

(Scene shifts to The D Ranch...Caprice, Dez, Ziva, and Cal, sitting at the kitchen table...laughing....Cal gets up, walks out onto the back patio...Dez, curious, follows)

Dez: ”Cal..honey...?”

(Cal is seen looking off to the West...)

Cal: “Something is wrong....”

Dez: “Cal..what?”

(Cal closes his eyes....then...in a whisper)

Cal: “Something is wrong”

AND NOW, THE CONTINUATION OF

“To Become A Man”

(scene opens in Shenendoah Park, dusk, Danny is seen walking slowly along the downhill slope of dirt and rock road, his crutches leading him, as he begins to look both ways into the tall trees alongside the road)

Danny: “It’s going to real dark soon...”

(A rustling of leaves to his left startle him...goose bumps crawl over his body...he turns his head towards the sound...and stops. He watches a squirrel scamper across the ground, stop, lift its head up as if looking at him, then scampers up the nearest tree)

Danny: “Come on Danny....get it together..”

(He sees a fallen tree to the right..)

Danny: “Need to rest...gotta rest...you’re no good to dad if you don’t....”

(He looks at the large tree laying on the ground, stares at it, waiting for some woodland creature to crawl out from under it, then run towards him, snarling and gnashing its teeth..)

Danny: “Got to....”

(He slowly moves his crutches around to face the tree...his eyes wide, face fearful as he approaches the tree...He stops...stabilizes his legs by leaning forward on his crutches, lifts an arm up to his eyes, wipes tears off his face...)

Danny: “You have to....can’t just stand here....”

(He turns his head back up the road he has been coming down, all that can be seen is dark forest...he turns back to the fallen tree...and moves towards it..)

Danny: “Go.....just go....”

(He sniffles as more tears fall...his eyes probing for any movement around the tree trunk....The trunk, splintered after falling, lays against the large tree laying on the ground)

Danny: “I could lean against it...”

(He reaches the tree....he takes one of his crutches, knocks it against the tree, backs up, waiting....no movement....he closes his eyes, turns, and sits on the tree. After a few moments, he starts to relax...)

Danny: “Better.....just for a minute....”

(He looks again up the road where he came from, sees for the first time how steep the incline is...his eyebrows go up...)

Danny: “I came down THAT?”

(A small smile....then he nods his head...)

Danny: “Dad would be proud....”

(He takes his arms out of his crutches, lays them against the tree...he begins rubbing his thighs with his hands, easing the aching muscles....then...)

Danny: “Dad....I have to get you help....I can’t rest....”

(He looks around, noticing the absence of shadows...)

Danny: “Got dark quick...man..”

(He turns his head to the side, looking into the dark depth of forest next to him...)

Danny: “To dark for that...wow....it’s like real dark in there. And I’m sitting on the edge of real dark....”

(He gathers his crutches, places his arms in them, leans against the aluminum helpers, and rocks his torso back and forth, willing his tired body upright....He leaves the tree, then stands....)

Danny: “Dad....I’m still going.....”

(He starts the trek down the steep road again, careful where he places his crutches...)

Danny: “An hour?...Two?...How long have I been gone...?”

(scene shifts to Gibbs in the tent, his eyes open...He looks at his watch....)

Gibbs: “3 hours....son....please be careful....”

(He closes his eyes....)

Gibbs: “I am so sorry,....”

(He manages to roll over on his side, groaning....he picks up one of the water bottles Danny places by the mattress, drinks gratefully....he wipes his mouth....)

Gibbs: “Pull it together, Gibbs....”

(The full moon lightens up the camp area, and he sees a shadow moving alongside the wall of his tent....Something outside, dog size, is approaching....Gibbs notices for the first time, the zipper to the tent door is half open....)

Gibbs; “Great...you didn’t tell him to zip it up....”

(The shadow moves towards the zippered opening, and through the thin mesh, the head of a coyote slowly moves into view....Gibbs, just as slowly, reaches for his backpack, next to the bed, and slips out his weapon, aiming it at the predator’s head as it comes into view....The coyote’s nostril’s flare....and the nose starts to part the opening, then the head of the coyote appears in full, the mesh hanging around its neck, and it stares at Gibbs....)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at The D Ranch, Dez standing next to Cal, talking low, as she looks through the windows, seeing Caprice, Dez, Tony, and Nell sitting at the kitchen table, Daisy lays at Caprice's feet, chewing contentedly on some ham jerky...)

Dez: "I haven't told them anything.....do you still feel....like...."

Cal: "I do not know, Destiny....I used to know...but now..."

(She pokes his chest, looks directly at him...)

Dez: "The hell you don't know! You felt something...that's more than any of the rest of us!..."

(Cal looks down at his wife....curious look...)

Cal: "What you say...."

Dez: "Come on angel boy...we don't have time for you to experience some kind of self-doubt thing...I know you well enough, and been around you long enough....you didn't feel what you felt for nothing...."

(He continues to stare at her....says nothing...)

Dez: "Aren't you always telling me there's a purpose to everything? And that sometimes you don't know what it is, but you accept it?"

(He continues to look at her...his eyebrows furrow....)

Dez: "So go with it, Cal!...Just find the 'what' and figure out the 'why?' later..."

(He nods)

Cal: "There are times, my Destiny....that I feel my wife knows more than I know"

(She gives a small grin....)

Dez: "You just now figuring that out, pretty man?"

(He kisses her)

Cal: "I have a request....."

Dez: "Yea, I know...you need some time alone.....you and whoever, whatever, wherever...time for the children to leave the table so the adults can talk"

(She turns....Cal extends an arm, takes her hand)

Cal: “No...stay with me....”

(She looks at him in surprise....)

Cal: “Please?”

(She nods her head, shocked into silence....)

Dez: “A bunch of ugly suckers aren’t going to fly around you, are they? I can do just fine without that, thank you very much....”

(Cal smiles..)

Cal: “No....there is no conflict at this moment....and that, beloved, is something you never wish to witness...”

(Her eyes get big)

Dez: “I was joking....”

Cal: “And I, my Destiny, was not....”

(He takes her by the hand, leads her off the deck, into the orchard.....)

Dez; “Cal....am I going to come back with a white streak in my hair? Or something?”

(Cal says nothing....looks at her hair...She waits...then..)

Cal: “No...not that....”

(She looks at him in surprise...)

Dez: “THEN WHAT?”

(He doesn’t answer....he takes her hand again, and walks further into the orchard....they reach an area near the fence line, charred hillside mixed with new growth can be seen in the light of the full moon....He releases her hand...turns to her, stares into her eyes.....She stares back, mesmerized by the abundance of gold flakes swirling in his bright hazel eyes....)

Cal: “There is no greater love man knows than the love I have for you”

(She stops breathing.....)

Cal: “Please, my Destiny....wait here....”

(Cal walks away, Dez stands, paralyzed by the emotions she’s feeling....)

(scene shifts to the kitchen....Daisy lifts her head, ears up...she gets up quickly, moves to the French doors, stands against the door, places a paw on the door lever, pulls it down, then opens the door...The group at the table watches, fascinated)

Nell: “Well...was it something we said?”

(Caprice watches Daisy trot off the patio...she leans down, looks under the table, and sees a half-eaten piece of jerky on the floor)

Caprice; “Whatever it is, it’s important....she left her treat....”

(scene shifts to Cal and Dez....Cal walks out of the orchard, leaving Dez standing inside it....He walks about 15 feet from her, then stops, standing in the edge of the open pasture, long, green grass around his feet)

(scene shifts to Dez...she stands, leaning against an olive tree....she watches Cal intensely...then she notices a slight breeze come through the orchard, filling her nose with scents of the forest, grass, dirt, flowers...she closes her eyes, inhales, and smiles...When she opens her eyes, she looks back at Cal...and her eyes open as wide as they ever have)

Dez: “Oh....my.....god.....”

(She feels a sense of euphoria start to warm her body and mind, goose bumps cover her body instantly, as she sees him standing, lifting his head up, eyes closed, his lips moving, his arms extended from his side.....and out of the hillside, small animals begin coming out, moving towards Cal, no fear, no caution.....rabbits, squirrels, two racoons, a coyote, and more....)

Dez: “This isn’t happening.....”

(The animals approach Cal, then stop before they reach him, some sitting, some standing, all of them intently focused on the human being in front of them....Then Dez feels the breeze pass her, seeing the long grass moving as the wind blows towards Cal...It reaches him, and begins to swirl, the grass at his feet moving

slowly, leaves from the olive trees, laying on the ground begin to rise in the vortex, slowly spinning in the air....)

Dez: “No...this ….it can’t...”

(The small whirl wind captures Cal’s hair, waving it, moving it, the leaves and sparkling dust capture the moment, framing Cal and the animals watching)

Dez: “How....beautiful.....”

(Cal opens his lips, and a perfect tenor voice begins to leave his lips, a melody, in a language she doesn’t recognize....one hand flies to her gaping mouth, the shock scaring her, but her fascination refusing to turn her eyes away....She sees birds start to arrive....hawks, sparrows, doves, redbirds, bluebirds....they come in, swooping down, landing in the grass next to the other animals, all of them now joining in whatever they feel....Dez feels a presence next to her....she looks down...)

Dez: “Daisy....”

(The huge dog is sitting beside her, watching Cal, her full attention focused on him....Then she looks to the other side....a whisper escapes)

Dez: “Oh god.....”

(less than 5 feet away, a huge mountain lion lays on the ground, staring at the human....)

Dez: “Kitty..?”

(A flip of the tail gives her the answer.....And then, the singing stops. The leaves in the air start to float back to the ground, the sparkling dust falls....She shakes her head, feeling the euphoria start to ebb. Her face becomes anxious...)

Dez: “No...come back...oh my god....that feeling....oh god.....”

(A rustle...then she sees Kitty leave, take 3 steps, and bounds over the wire fence....Daisy still sits, whining, her eyes still focused on Cal....then she sees the animals start to move, all of them scampering, flying, leaping away from the human as if they were just released from cages....Cal looks at the animals, smiles...then he turns to Dez....and once again, she stops breathing....)

Dez: “Cal.....”

(He looks at her, a small smile, his head slightly cocked, his expression waiting for her response...All she can see is his beautiful face, his lips slightly turned up in a smile... but none of those things compare to his eyes.....the hazel irises turned golden .....He speaks, his voice still carrying the perfect smoothness of the song...)

Cal: “My Destiny.....”

(She moves slowly towards him....and sees his eyes slowly return to their normal hazel color....her voice nearly a whisper...)

Dez: “That was....I don’t know what to call it....but is was the most beautiful, peaceful, warm, wonderful thing I’ve ever seen..or felt.....”

(He touches her face, runs his fingers through her short hair....)

Cal: “Are you too afraid now? Have I made an unforgivable mistake?”

(She stares at him in awe.....shakes her head...)

Dez: “You...you were.....Cal..I never thought I could love you more than I do....”

(She pauses, runs fingers over his face)

Dez: “God, I love you...Thank you...thank you for trusting me enough to show me”

Cal: “Now you know more....”

(She nods her head, her eyes still in awe of him....)

Dez: “Uh huh....”

Cal: “I know now”

Dez: “Uh huh....what do you know?”

Cal: “Nothing more than I did....but I know now, it was enough....”

(He touches her cheek...)

Cal: “It was as you said....as my wife, part of me, spoke to me....”

(She says nothing, places her hand over his on her cheek, closes her eyes)

Cal: “I must go...and I must take Caprice with me...”

(She opens her eyes.....nods her head....)

Dez: “Gibbs...Danny.....”

(He nods)

Dez: “Then go...help them...but you come back to me, Cal....you hear me? You come back to me....”

(he whispers in her ear)

Cal: “My Destiny....I never leave you”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens in the campsite tent....Gibbs is looking directly in the face of a coyote, its yellow eyes staring at him...)

Gibbs: “I don’t want to shoot you....”

(The coyote doesn’t startle at his voice...instead, it looks at the plastic bag laying next to the mattress...Gibbs slowly turns his eyes to the bag...a leftover cooked T-bone that Danny had left for him...next to it, another bag, ham jerky...The coyote emits a low whine...for the first time, he can see her body, and sees the extended teats on her belly...)

Gibbs: “Is that it? You’re hungry? You need something for your pups?”

(The coyote turns its gaze back to him....Gibbs slowly pulls the bag onto his chest, looks down at it, pulls the large steak out....He tosses it towards the animal....)

Gibbs: “Go on...take it....I’d rather you eat the steak than try to eat me....”

(The coyote stares at the steak on the floor of the tent for a short moment...then in an amazingly fast movement, the jaws snatch the piece of meat up, backs out of the tent, and leaves...Gibbs looks at the wall of the tent, no longer seeing the shadow of the coyote...he lays his head back, and lets out a long breath....then begins to cough....then he chokes....his thoughts race....)

Gibbs: “Gotta raise up....going to drown if I don’t”

(He gets an arm underneath his torso, and finds he can lift himself up...He raises the upper portion of his body, feeling a liquid sensation in his side....then exhausted, his face wracked in pain, he leans his back against a tent pole, the fabric and pole supporting his upper body....he begins to breathe....with each breath, some color comes back into his face....)

Gibbs: “Thank you....thank you...”

(He reaches for the bag of ham jerky....he pulls a piece out, puts it in his mouth, and chews)

Gibbs: “Danny...please be safe....”

(scene shifts to the road...Danny moving along steadily, ignoring the forest sounds around him....he focuses on a sign coming up....)

LAKE PASS ROAD

(He remembers the words of Mr. Rodney....the road goes around the lake...and adds 6 miles to the journey he’s on....The road is inviting....but the trail he’s on is the most direct route...He remembers the washout...then his eyes get wide....)

Danny: “NO WAY! PEOPLE?”

(At a short distance, down the hill, he sees two red lights....He increases his pace, the adrenalin moving him faster....He reaches the edge of the washed out area, and his heart sinks....)

Danny: “No....please...no...”

(In front of him, the trail drops off, completely washed out by the rainstorm...a 45 degree drop is in front of him...the other side of the washout, the trail he needs to follow, has crumbled, the trail that connected before, now 10 feet below him....He sees the red lights...the tail lights of Mr. Rodney’s jeep, still glowing...and as he steadies himself, he can hear it...the engine is still running....He moves closer to get a better look...He can now see the jeep made it across, furrows in the descending ledge in front of him evidence of the jeep’s tracks....and looking down from his higher ledge, he can see into the back seat of the jeep....Mr. Rodney lays across it...his eyes closed....one hand on his chest....Danny yells out...)

Danny: “MR. RODNEY! WAKE UP! IT’S ME! DANNY GIBBS! I NEED HELP!.....MY DAD! HE’S HURT BAD!”

(Danny waits...Mr Rodney does not move....then the hand on the chest pulls off, then places itself back on....he can hear a moan....)

Danny: “Mr. Rodney!...Are you okay?”

(Nothing....)

Danny: “I’ve got to get across....I have to ...My dad....Mr. Rodney....”

(He looks around...to the left, the drop off is worse...a sheer up and down small cliff was formed by the ground separating...to his right, a smooth road...but 6 miles of road....He looks at the descending hill in front of him....)

Danny: “I can’t climb down....it’s too steep....”

(He turns, looks back up the road....his face pleading)

Danny: “Dad...tell me what to do.....help me....Dad...help me help you....”

(silence....Danny’s eyes well up in tears...he wipes them...)

Danny: “No more crying....my dad needs me....I can’t do nothing....I can’t lose another father....”

(He stares at the jeep...then looks down at the 10 foot hill, steep, sand from the creek bed forming a smooth wall...he shakes his head....)

Danny: “If I don’t...dad will die....”

(Danny lifts his arms out of the crutches...he pushes them both up in the air, then releases them, allowing them to fall to the bottom of the hill....his legs begin to buckle....He closes his eyes...)

Danny: “I love you dad....It’s the only way....”

(He leans forward, pushing himself over the edge of the ledge...)

SEASON 29, EPISODE 1, “To Become A Man”, Part 3

PREVIOUSLY ON NCIS...

(In front of him, the trail drops off, completely washed out by the rainstorm...a 45 degree drop is in front of him...the other side of the washout, the trail he needs to follow, has crumbled, the trail that connected before, now 10 feet below him....He sees the red lights...the tail lights of Mr. Rodney's jeep, still glowing...and as he steadies himself, he can hear it...the engine is still running....He moves closer to get a better look...He can now see the jeep made it across, furrows in the descending ledge in front of him evidence of the jeep's tracks....and looking down from his higher ledge, he can see into the back seat of the jeep....Mr. Rodney lays across it...his eyes closed....one hand on his chest....Danny yells out...)

Danny: "MR. RODNEY! WAKE UP! IT'S ME! DANNY GIBBS! I NEED HELP!.....MY DAD! HE'S HURT BAD!"

(Danny waits...Mr Rodney does not move....then the hand on the chest pulls off, then places itself back on....he can hear a moan....)

Danny: "Mr. Rodney!...Are you okay?"

(Nothing....)

Danny: "I've got to get across....I have to ...My dad....Mr. Rodney...."

(He looks around...to the left, the drop off is worse...a sheer up and down small cliff was formed by the ground separating...to his right, a smooth road...but 6 miles of road....He looks at the descending hill in front of him....)

Danny: "I can't climb down....it's too steep...."

(He turns, looks back up the road....his face pleading)

Danny: "Dad...tell me what to do.....help me....Dad...help me help you...."

(silence....Danny's eyes well up in tears...he wipes them...)

Danny: "No more crying....my dad needs me....I can't do nothing....I can't lose another father...."

(He stares at the jeep...then looks down at the 10 foot hill, steep, sand from the creek bed forming a smooth wall...he shakes his head....)

Danny: “If I don’t...dad will die....”

(Danny lifts his arms out of the crutches...he pushes them both up in the air, then releases them, allowing them to fall to the bottom of the hill....his legs begin to buckle....He closes his eyes...)

Danny: “I love you dad....It’s the only way....”

(He leans forward, pushing himself over the edge of the ledge...)

AND NOW, THE CONTINUATION OF “TO BECOME A MAN”

(scene opens, night, in Caprice’s Jaguar, Caprice driving, Cal in front passenger seat, Daisy sitting up in the back seat behind Caprice, the large eyes focused on Cal. Her ears perk up as Caprice speaks)

Caprice: “Do you know any more yet?”

Cal: “No...forgive me, Caprice. I should, but....No...I do not”

Caprice: “Don’t apologize....at least you know enough that we’re on our way. We’ll figure it out when we get there”

(Cal looks over at her....a few moments pass...then...)

Cal: “There seems to be constant reminders that others see things as I should”

Caprice: “No, honey...Dez and I are women. All we need to know is our husband or child is in some kind of danger. From there, we just go”

(Silence...Cal looks out the windshield at the passing trees, the Jaguar moving at a substantial amount over the speed limit)

Cal: “How much longer until we arrive?”

Caprice: “The Ranger Station? Maybe a couple of hours...So far, traffic is light, so we’re making good time” (pause) “Why? Something else wrong?”

(Cal shakes his head...)

Cal: “No...what is there is enough”

Caprice: “Is it about Jethro or Danny?”

(Cal is silent for a moment...then...)

Cal: “Yes”

Caprice: “Both?”

(Cal nods...He looks through the windshield up at the night sky....A bright full moon creates shadows through the trees, the 2 lane hilly road is deserted except for them. His eyes move from the enormous clusters of stars in the sky, then to the shadows of the trees on the road in front of them....)

Cal: “Magnificence or shadows....”

(Caprice waits for him to continue....)

Caprice: “Right now, the shadows bother me most..just saying”

Cal: “Shadows are always larger than the object they imitate”

(Caprice looks at Cal, then back at the road)

Caprice: “As in, the fear is bigger than what’s really wrong?”

(Cal shrugs...)

Cal: “I wish I could say yes. But...sometimes the size of the shadow does not matter”

(Caprice listens....She reaches over and takes Cal’s hand...)

Caprice: “You said something right after I first met you. It stuck with me. And it’s been so much help in this life I’m in now...”

(Cal looks over at her, curious)

Cal: “That you feel something I have said echoes in you....I am honored. What was this I said?”

(Caprice gives a small grin....she looks over at Cal for a moment..)

Caprice: “It only takes a small light to defeat the largest darkness”

(Cal stares at her, his face blank)

Caprice: “If what’s Right has enough ammunition and there aren’t any witnesses, then Right can whip the crap outa Wrong”

(His eyes show surprise)

Cal: “I said that?”

Caprice: “No, darlin’....That was from “The World According to McGibbs”...soon to be published”

(slight grin)

Caprice: “Or not....”

(Cal smiles...he lifts her hand, kisses the back of it..)

Cal: “It is perfect.....”

(pause...)

Cal: “I am humbled by you. By my wife...Thank you”

Caprice: “Thank me later...and tighten your seatbelt...we need to make better time”

(The sound of the engine increases as Caprice presses the accelerator...The shadows on the road move by faster...Cal can be seen testing the tension on his seat belt)

(scene shifts to a ground level view looking up at the night sky...an infinite number of stars against the dark blue sky can be seen through the treetops...There is silence....then movement...)

(scene shifts to Danny on his back, laying on the soft dirt at the bottom of the steep hill, arms at his side, legs splayed...He blinks...then...)

Danny: “Legs..damn...sorry mom...dag nabbit...legs hurt...they haven’t hurt like this in a long time...I’ve gone and messed up...”

(He slowly draws one leg up...his face winces...then he draws the other leg up...more pain on his face..)

Danny: “I messed up bad...”

(He moves his arms, then he gently lifts his head up....)

Danny: “No broken neck....Arms are okay....”

(He rolls over, sees his crutches laying on the ground where he threw them...He rolls over, pulls one towards him, then uses it to move the other one that is further away, closer to him. He is finally able to grasp both....scene shows him rolling over on his side, pulling the crutches under him, then struggles to his knees....The pain in his legs shoot through his body, his face reflecting the pain)

Danny: “Get up...do what your dad would do...(lowers his voice) “Sometimes you gotta push through it, son...Don’t give up”

(He places both arms in the crutches, begins the process of standing...His head turns to the jeep, the taillights still glowing, the engine still running....)

Danny: “Okay dad, works for me....”

(Danny seen moving his crutches in front of him, starting towards the Jeep)

(scene shifts to inside the tent....Gibbs sitting upright against the tent wall, watching the shadows outside...Through the mesh door, he can see across the rock floor of the campsite, then the edge of the forest bordering the site....two by two, the reflections of yellow eyes appear, dimly glowing in the darkness...)

Gibbs: “Well Gibbs, you went and did it....The momma must have told her pals that there’s food here...”

(He looks down beside him...on the floor of the tent, a towel and a small pile of toilet paper can be seen, both soaked in blood and blood-stained tissue from coughing)

Gibbs: “That’s what they smell.....”

(He looks out the tent door, sees the eyes are stationary....He speaks in low tones to the pack of coyotes gathering...)

Gibbs: “Stay where you are guys....I do not want to shoot you”

(He pulls the gun from the floor into his lap...)

Gibbs: “I’ve got a young boy on the way to get help...bravest boy there is..and I’ll be damned if when he gets back, I’m dead....Nothing personal boys...”

(He inspects the weapon...then he reaches for his backpack, pulls out an extra clip and lays it on the floor)

Gibbs: “...but I’ll blow you to hell before that happens”

(He begins to cough...then the coughing worsens....he covers his mouth with a wad of tissue...when he takes the tissue away...more blood.)

Gibbs: “Not good Gibbs...”

(He leans his head against the wall of the tent, closes his eyes....)

Gibbs: “Weak...tired...sleep Gibbs.....”

(He shakes his head...focuses on the coyotes....)

Gibbs: “But that’s exactly what you want....isn’t it?”

(He pulls the pistol upwards, aims it at one set of eyes, the set in the middle of the pack, slightly closer than the others...)

Gibbs: “You die first...”

(He lowers the weapon, closes his eyes, holds his rib cage with one hand....he presses gently, then yells out in pain....He catches his breath....)

Gibbs: “Just be safe son. Always...stay safe. I’ll be okay...”(pause) “But hurry son...(another pause) “..hurry...”

(More coughing....)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the washout, Danny approaching the Jeep...He arrives, then looks into the back seat, sees Mr. Rodney laying down on his back, his knees drawn up)

Danny: “Mr. Rodney!...Mr. Rodney!...Wake up!”

(Rodney stirs....he opens his eyes....)

Danny: “Sir!...Please....”

(Rodney starts to move his hand to his chest....then the arm drops....)

Danny: “Sir?...Are you hurt?”

(No reply.....Danny notices for the first time, the bluish tint to the man’s lips...His eyes open wide for a moment....then...)

Danny: “Okay Danny boy...’*What would dad do’* got you here...Now...It’s time for ‘*What would mom do?*”

(Danny opens the rear passenger door...He gingerly places one foot on the small iron step plate under the door frame...He grabs the top of the truck bed with his right hand, the top of the jeep’s driver’s door with the left...He takes a breath, pulls himself up as the one leg pushes, and finds himself standing on the floor of the jeep...His crutches clatter to the ground...He moves his left hand to the top of the driver’s seat headrest, then the right hand from the jeep body to the top of the rear seat...he moves one leg inside, places it firmly, then moves the other foot off the iron step...He inches forward, his hands moving, one after the other, the legs keeping in synch, moving him closer to the passenger side, closer to Mr. Rodney’s head...)

Danny: “Mr. Rodney!....Are you okay?”

(No reaction..Danny reaches down with his right hand, gently slaps the man on the cheek...)

Danny: “MR. RODNEY!”

(nothing...he slaps him again harder....The man’s eyes flutter....)

Rodney: “tin....”

(Rodney tries again to lift an arm up onto his chest....then it falls....his eyes close..and his chest stops moving up and down....Danny sees what is happening...)

Danny: “OH NO YOU DON’T! ...YOU CANNOT DIE!...NOT NOW!”

(Danny slumps to his knees on the back floorboard....)

Danny: “Talk to me mom.....You’ve trained me...I know what to do....Now help me remember...”

(scene shifts to the camp site, outside the tent near the downward slope that borders the campsite, the tops of trees seen...on the rocks bordering the ledge, 5 coyotes can be seen. The one in the middle, larger, scars on his fur, sniffs the air, his nostrils flaring...he begins to step forward, tentatively....the head drops downward..)

(scene shifts to inside the tent...Gibbs sits upright, staring through the mesh...He sees the round yellow reflections of the animals’ eyes shift...they narrow....then they lower, and can be seen slowly advancing)

Gibbs: “Here we go...”

(He raises the weapon, aims it at the pack leader, then moves the sight to a space on the ground beside the coyote...He pulls the trigger. The loud sound of the gun echoes across the rocks and onto the cliffs jutting out alongside the camp site....)

(scene shifts to the pack....An object hits the ground by the pack leader, chipping rock away...the whine of the ricochet resonates in the rock area....The coyote jumps, then scampers back ..the rest of the pack doing the same...)

(scene shifts to Gibbs...his weapon still trained on the coyotes....He sees them retreat...)

Gibbs: ‘Good boys...Now go.....It’s not worth dying over”

(He watches as the eyes disappear...he keeps looking...waiting....then...)

Gibbs: “Well hell.....”

(scene shifts to view of the edge of the camp site....two sets of yellow eyes can be seen further to the left...then two more sets further to the right....then in the

middle of the two groups, another set of eyes appears....and they advance towards him....the two on one side advance as well...the other side does the same...)

Gibbs: “Splitting up....still coming....Okay Gibbs, time to bring your A game...they’re smarter than....”

(A coughing spell hits him....he gasps for breath as his throat clogs with blood....He rolls over on his side, coughing the obstruction out of his throat....He stops...takes some breaths....sees the clot of blood on the tent floor)

Gibbs: “Good job, Gibbs...you just chummed the air”

(He turns his head towards the coyotes....)

Gibbs: “Get up Gibbs!”

(The coyotes are now closer.....three sets of eyes can be seen halfway between the camp site edge and his tent...)

Gibbs: “Where are the other two?....”

(He scans the faint shadows seen through the tent wall, the moonlight illuminating the background....He sees nothing....)

Gibbs: “Where are you....”

(two coyotes can be seen approaching the other side of the tent, staying close to the wall of the cliff, no moonlight reaching them, no shadows cast on the side of the tent)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the Jeep....Danny seen leaning over Mr. Rodney, his young hands pressed together, ready to press on the man’s chest...his mind goes back...Caprice’s voice sounds in his head..)

Caprice: “You look for a blue tinge to the skin and lips...if you see it, that means there’s a lack of oxygen in the area....oxygen is carried by blood....so...what needs to happen?”

Danny: “Get his heart pumping?”

(Danny places his hands over the man’s heart....He straightens up, then remembers....)

Caprice: “Faster than once a second....about 100 presses per minute....think of a song...”

Danny: “America The Beautiful!”

(Caprice looks at him curiously....)

Danny: “I was under pressure! I panicked!...”

Caprice: “Okay...that song works....”

(Danny starts pressing to the beat of the song, mouthing as he presses on each syllable..)

Danny: “Oh beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain....”

(Danny watches the man’s face as he keeps pressing, keeping in time with the song....He stops, then waits, watching for a response...he places two fingers on the man’s neck, feeling where his mother taught him to feel...)

Danny: “A PULSE!...Not much, but something! GOOD JOB MR. RODNEY! YOU ROCK!”

(Danny places his hands back the man’s chest, ready to deliver more pressure on the heart....His hands slide over the chest, searching for the right spot, and they skim over the top of the man’s shirt pocket....a slight square can be felt inside the pocket....His mind remembers.....)

Caprice: “A lot of heart attack victims have heart disorders.....look for.....”

(He thinks hard...)

Caprice: “Now honey, lots of people that suffer from heart attacks have had them before...most of them will have tiny pills called Nitroglycerine....”

Danny: ‘NO WAY!”

Caprice: "Not that nitro, silly...it's a medicine that makes the blood vessels larger and helps the blood flow faster from the heart to the body, giving more oxygen as it does..."

(Danny's eyes get big....He remembers Mr. Rodney's word...)

Danny: "Tin.....(pause) "...HE SAID TIN!"

(Danny eagerly reaches in the pocket, pulls out a small aluminum square tin..he opens it....sees tiny white pills....Again, his memory takes him back...)

Danny: "But how do I get someone to swallow a pill if they're dead? Or whatever?"

Caprice: "Sublingual...."

Danny: "Huh?"

Caprice: "Sublingual...you place one pill under their tongue or between their cheek and gum...it will melt...and it will enter their system much faster than swallowing it..And honey, speed is the most important thing at that time...."

(He takes a pill out of the tin...he looks at Mr. Rodney's mouth, partially open...the lips aren't as blue as before....He takes one hand and presses on each side of the man's mouth, creating an 'O', then he grimaces as the other hand enters the man's mouth, searching for the tongue...then sliding the pill under the tongue...he releases the tiny object, then quickly yanks his hand out of the man's mouth....)

Danny: "Oh gross...."

(He wipes his hand on his pants...He closes the tin, and places it in his vest pocket...and then...weakly....)

Rodney: "Damn.....doctors....."

(Danny's eyes get big....the man's eyes get big.....they stare at each other for a moment....Rodney looks around...still weak....blinks....)

Rodney: "Where's …….your……dad...?"

(Danny excitedly relates the story of how he got to him...Rodney's eyes stare at him as he finishes....)

Danny: “And that’s how.....”

(The man’s face grimaces.....)

Rodney: “Take me...take us.....help.....”

(He closes his eyes, but breathes steadily.....)

Rodney: “Can....you drive.....son?”

(Danny looks at the steering wheel...then at the gear shifter....he mouths “thank you” when he sees it’s an automatic transmission.....He looks back to the man....)

Danny: “You betcha!....I’ll get us back!...”

(Danny clumsily steps out of the jeep, picks up his crutches, places them on the back floorboards....he closes the passenger door, then climbs into the driver’s seat...He looks at the controls....)

Danny: “D for Drive...”

(He looks over down at his legs....)

Danny: “How did you get in this seat without crutches?”

(He looks at the gear shifter, reaches down and pulls the lever to the seat, pulling it forward as much as possible....his legs finally reach the pedals....)

Danny: “Oh lord....don’t let me be an Aunt Ziva....”

(He puts the Jeep in gear, lets his foot off the brake...the jeep moves forward, deeper into the wood....He turns the wheel, narrowly missing a tree, and heads towards the rough road....he gets to the road, then turns the jeep onto it, oversteering, and heading back towards the embankment...he presses the brake, stopping the vehicle....and looks over the hood of the jeep...and sees the 1000 foot drop off....He looks at the gear symbols by the shifter...)

Danny: “R for Ruh Roh!....”

(The jeep starts backing up....then moves forward as the jeep travels down the road, weaving from side to side as Danny learns to drive a car....)

Danny: “Dad...we’re gonna do it....We’re gonna do it dad!”

(He takes a quick look at Mr. Rodney...and smiles big.)

Danny: “We did it mom!....you and me....we did it...!”

(Rodney is seen, breathing steady....his eyes open, staring at the treetops passing over them)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the Ranger station....dark parking lot...cars parked in spaces...Danny weaves the jeep into the lot...he comes to a jumping stop in front of the station...He looks back at Mr. Rodney, grinning....)

Danny: “WE MADE IT!....HOLD ON!...”

(Danny opens the door to the jeep, pulls his crutches out....then moves quickly towards the station....)

(scene shifts to inside the station...men are gathered, talking loudly. Several wear Park Ranger uniforms..)

Voice: “I bet he went off to get drunk!”

Voice 2: “Rodney don’t drink you fool!”

Park Ranger: “Gentlemen, I’ll call in for some men...we know he’s not at home, so we’ll trace his last trip up to the Gibbs campsite....”

Voice 1: “Have to go two ways...we don’t know if he took Ridge Pass or the old logging road”

(scene shifts to the front doors....Danny enters..he looks at the man, and speaks...)

Danny: “Please...I need some help....”

(No one replies...the men keep talking....Danny takes a deep breath....)

Danny: “MR. RODNEY IS IN THE JEEP OUTSIDE! MY DAD IS HURT AND DYING!”

(The group of men turn in shock. They see a young boy, dried blood on his face, more blood on his shirt....Danny stares at all of them....then in a loud voice, demanding, not asking....he yells out)

“DO YOUR JOBS PEOPLE!”

(scene shifts to the inside of the tent...Gibbs sees the yellow eyes get closer...The middle one stops...then through the mesh, Gibbs can see two other coyotes...both approaching from the side, their shadows now a silhouette against the wall of the tent....The lead coyote stays in his place, staring at Gibbs....then the pack leader growls....The shadows of the two coyotes on the side begin to trot towards the front of the tent....)

Gibb: “Bad choice”

(He begins firing his weapon....yelps and one whine is heard....)

Gibbs; “GET BACK!...”

(One silhouete is still seen on the side...and when Gibbs looks straight ahead at the pack leader....his face shows disbelief)

Gibbs: “You’ve got to be kidding me...”

(The coyote staring at Gibbs sits calmly...and gives a look that seems suspiciously like a smile....)

Gibbs; “You son of a bitch....You’re waiting....aren’t you?”

(The coyote remains in its pose, staring at Gibbs, the look of triumph on its face...beyond the pack leader, more yellow eyes come up over the edge of the camp site. Others have joined the hunt)

(scene fades to black and white)

TO BE CONTINUED

Season 29, Episode 1, “To Become A Man” The Conclusion

Previously On NCIS...

Danny: “MR. RODNEY IS IN THE JEEP OUTSIDE! MY DAD IS HURT AND DYING!”

(The group of men turn in shock. They see a young boy, dried blood on his face, more blood on his shirt....Danny stares at all of them....then in a loud voice, demanding, not asking....he yells out)

“DO YOUR JOBS PEOPLE!”

(scene shifts to the inside of the tent...Gibbs sees the yellow eyes get closer...The middle one stops...then through the mesh, Gibbs can see two other coyotes...both approaching from the side, their shadows now a silhouette against the wall of the tent....The lead coyote stays in his place, staring at Gibbs....then the pack leader growls....The shadows of the two coyotes on the side begin to trot towards the front of the tent....)

Gibb: “Bad choice”

(He begins firing his weapon....yelps and one whine is heard....)

Gibbs; “GET BACK!...”

(One silhouette is still seen on the side...and when Gibbs looks straight ahead at the pack leader....his face shows disbelief)

Gibbs: “You’ve got to be kidding me...”

(The coyote staring at Gibbs sits calmly...and gives a look that seems suspiciously like a smile....)

Gibbs; “You son of a bitch....You’re waiting....aren’t you?”

(The coyote remains in its pose, staring at Gibbs, the look of triumph on its face...beyond the pack leader, more yellow eyes come up over the edge of the camp site. Others have joined the hunt)

And Now...The Dynamic Conclusion Of...

“To Become A Man”

(scene opens at Ranger Station HQ, ambulance lights, law enforcement, 4wd trucks fill the lot. In the ambulance, Rodney lays on the cot, yelling at the EMT tech...)

Rodney: “WHERE IS HE?...LET ME SEE HIM!”

Tech: “Rodney, simmer down....he’s inside...”

Rodney: “I CAN’T LEAVE....NOT WITHOUT SEEING HIM!”

(The tech nods to his partner, female....the female tech nods back, exits the ambulance)

(scene shifts to inside the Ranger HQ, activity abounds....Danny is seen in a back office, sitting next to a radio desk as a Ranger speaks into a microphone. Danny keeps pushing an EMT tech away, as the tech tries to clean and dress the scratches on his head)

Danny: “Ask them how long....”

(The Ranger clicks the old school microphone...)

Ranger: “Eagle 1...eta to take-off?”

Danny: “Eagle 1?”

Ranger: “Rescue helicopter, son...Even if we could get to your dad fast, which because of the road being washed out, we can’t, after what you described about your dad’s injury, he wouldn’t do well being carried back down in a 4 wheel drive vehicle...Eagle 1 is our Park Service Rescue Chopper”

Danny: “How long...”

(radio crackles)

“Base, Eagle 1 ready for lift off...ETA to camp site 30 minutes”

Ranger: “Roger that Eagle 1...”

(The Ranger turns to Danny....)

Ranger: “30 minutes son....so it’s best...”

(Another Ranger walks in quickly....)

Ranger 2: “Danny...I’ve got your mom on the phone.....”

(Danny snatches the phone out of the man’s hands....his voice calm...)

Danny: “Mom, it’s okay...A rescue helicopter is on its way, and Mr. Rodney is ok too...”

(scene shifts to the Jaguar....Caprice driving, Cal in the front seat....Caprice has the call on the car audio...)

Caprice; “RESCUE HELICOPTER? MR. RODNEY!....DANNY!...WHAT HAS HAPPENED? ARE YOU OKAY?”

(scene shifts back to Ranger HQ....Danny looks at the phone...he looks up at the Ranger....holds out the phone...)

Danny: “Sir...could you please tell my mom what happened? I don’t know if....I’ll probably leave something out....and she’ll be mad....”

(Caprice can be heard on the phone, screaming for Danny to get back on the phone...The Ranger nods to the young boy....takes the phone...)

Ranger 2: “Mrs. Gibbs..this is Area Ranger Major Sid Jones....Ma’am....you have quite a boy here....”

(The Ranger moves away from the talking people....)

Ranger 2: “If you’ll allow me, ma’am...I’ll fill you in on the details....Ma’am?..Please...Ma’am...I’ll tell you if you stop screaming at me..”

(Ranger begins telling Caprice and Cal the story.....)

(scene shifts to the Jaguar....Caprice ends the call....she looks over at Cal, who is equally astonished....)

Caprice: “Cal...did you get all that?”

(Cal says nothing....then he looks at Caprice)

Cal: “I am not sure what to say.....”

Caprice: “I do....we need to get there quicker....”

Cal: “That option had entered my mind....yes....”

Caprice: ‘Okay...I’ll try not to get us killed....”

Cal: “Death is not to be so feared, Caprice....”

(She looks at him, shakes her head, then presses the accelerator harder....)

Cal: “Caprice..no need....that is the entrance to our destination....”

(scene shows Caprice sliding the Jaguar in between two parked police cars...They look at an ambulance, and see Danny stepping out....Caprice bolts out of the car, runs to Danny...Cal exits the car, opens the rear door, Daisy leaps out, runs to Danny as well....Danny sees his mother....he stops...looks at her, calmly....then....)

Danny: “MOM!....”

(She runs to him as he moves quickly on his crutches....Cal watches Danny as he and Caprice meet and embrace....)

Danny: “Mom...Dad’s hurt....”

Caprice: ‘I know baby...Major Jones told me all about it....My god son...you walked all that way...in the dark....”

(Danny starts to let loose....)

Danny: “I had to mom....I had to....please don’t be mad....I had to....”

Caprice: “Oh baby, I’m not mad....no....I’m worried...”

(She pulls back, runs her fingers over his forehead...)

Caprice: “How did you get that cut?”

Danny: “Falling down a hill....on purpose....It was the only way to get to Mr. Rodney in time..”

Caprice: “I heard...the rangers tell me that you saved that man’s life....”

(Danny nods....)

Danny: “I remembered what you taught me...I really did, mom...”

(She hugs him)

Caprice: “I know, son...and I’m so proud of you....Now tell me...tell me about Jethro...what happened...?”

(Ranger walks up to them....)

Ranger: “Mrs. Gibbs? Your dog....just a warning....there’s been a pack of coyotes seen in the area...It would be best if you kept an eye on that animal ma’am...”

(The ranger looks at Daisy....Daisy’s face and ears are staring intently over the HQ roof, up towards the mountain....The Ranger sees Daisy clearly for the first time..)

Ranger: “Damn...that’s one big dog....(pauses) “Anyway, ma’am, the pack is being led by a Wolf-Coyote mix....That Alpha Male has them hunting as a group....Coyotes don’t normally do that...and there have been a few reports from some hikers that they’re aggressive....I’d just keep an eye on your...”

(The muffled echo of gun shots from high on the mountainside can barely be heard...Cal looks up....he stares in the area Daisy is staring....Daisy begins to whimper, whine, paws moving....Cal kneels by the frantic dog...)

Cal: “That is your master.....Go”

(Daisy takes off in a blur, racing across the HQ picnic table area, then up the hillside.....The Ranger watches, astounded....)

Ranger: “Damn...never seen a dog move so fast....”

Danny: “6 miles....”

Ranger: “Yes son...that’s how far....”

Danny: “As the crow flies”

Ranger: “Yes...where did you....”

Danny: “That’s what Mr. Rodney said...he said it was a straight line....”

Ranger: “It is...but it’s all uphill son....and some rocky terrain....”

(They look, see Daisy leap over a low boulder, land on the top of another, then instantly disappear from sight....)

Ranger: “Uh...damn...that’s one big dog...and fast....”

(Caprice turns to Cal....)

Caprice; “Cal...that echo....”

(Cal is looking upwards...he nods....)

Cal: “The pack has found him....He is fighting them...”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the camp site....Gibbs sits upright, still watching the coyotes scamper to the edge of the campsite....The pack leader is standing, pacing back and forth, only 20 feet from the tent entrance...Gibbs studies the animal...)

Gibbs; ‘You’re not all coyote, bubba....”

(As if the animal heard him, it stops...It allows the human a full view of his large body, the larger head...)

Gibbs: “You’re half wolf...Coywolf....That’s why you're hunting in a pack....”

(The Coywolf begins pacing, looking back at the still wary pack of coyotes....The leader gives what sounds like a bark to the pack....The coyotes begin to carefully advance a few steps)

Gibbs: “I could kill you and it would be over...Why are you still standing there....”

(The corner of his eye picks up a shadow to his left....)

Gibbs: “THAT’S WHY!”

(He turns his weapon towards the quickly advancing shadows, and pulls the trigger to his gun 3 times...Two coyote bodies slam in to the side of the tent, not 3 feet from where he’s laying....the bodies threaten to collapse the tent...Then the shadow of two coyote bodies, both still, can be seen pressing against the bottom of the tent wall, streaks of darkness from the outside seen on the wall of the tent....The tent wall holds...Gibbs turns quickly towards the mesh screen in front.....)

Gibbs: “Now..it’s your.....”

(The pack leader is gone.....)

Gibbs: “Okay bubba...where the hell are you...?”

(scene shifts to the mountain side....Daisy seen running at full speed, leaping, darting to avoid trees, her legs a blur as she reaches a steep incline, rocks jutting, dirt in between them solid, packed...without breaking stride, the huge dog climbs the incline, running in between boulders, her rear legs churning dirt as she races towards her master.....She stops...barely panting....her ears perked.....Three gunshots are heard echoing....Her nostrils flare as she draws in the air, searching for the scent of the one she loves above all others....Then she darts off to the side, veering in a slightly different direction....She disappears under the growth of trees, the only light coming from the moon...)

(scene shifts to the Ranger station....Caprice, Danny, and Cal in the office with the radio....The ranger keys the mic....)

Ranger: “Go ahead Eagle 1”

Radio: “We’re coming up on the campsite now, base...will confirm when we have a visual.....We are coming in from the side...the site should be directly on the other side...(silence) “.HOLY JESUS!...”

Ranger: “Eagle 1...Repeat...Eagle 1!”

Radio: “YOU WILL NOT BELIEVE WHAT WE’RE SEEING!”

(scene shifts to campsite....The pack leader has called the rest of the coyotes towards the tent....The leader stands to the side, urging the pack towards the tent....)

Gibbs: “I hear you, asshole....You’re willing to sacrifice your soldiers for what you want....you’d have never made a good Marine....”

(The pack moves closer....Gibbs can see them now, 3...now 4...heads down, eyes narrowed...shadows on the side of the tent show two more approaching.....He loads his other clip into the gun...)

Gibbs: “7 in the clip...one in the chamber....I may not get you all, but I’ll send most of you to hell....”

(He raises his gun....the pack begins to trot towards him.....He raises the weapon...)

Gibbs: “Come and get it....”

(Without a sound, another presence leaps onto the flat rock shelf....then the screams and yelps of coyotes fill the air as almost 100 pounds of black and brown terror flies into the four coyotes advancing, Daisy’s mouth open, ripping and shredding everything it touches, fur and flesh flying as she lands, her snarls primeval, the sounds of wrath and power combining to fill the air with animal screams and fear filled yelps as fur is shredded, limbs are torn from their bodies, the coyotes still alive turn and run in fear, then die as the demonic newcomer jumps after them, leaping onto their back, the incredibly powerful jaws clamping on their necks, tearing as the animal twists its head, their necks still in the jaws of what they see for the last time....Inside the tent, Gibbs stares in disbelief at the carnage he sees outside....)

Gibbs: “Daisy.....god....Daisy.....How....”

(scene shifts back to the flat rock area....6 coyotes lay dead, blood, flesh, and animal limbs lay scattered on the rock floor....The animal responsible for the destruction stands....panting, its fur blood-soaked, its jaws open, the red-stained teeth, long, sharp, capable of bringing death to whoever or whatever stands in its way....from the side, the Coywolf stands, staring at the apparition that has, in the space of less than a human minute, devastated its pack....The pack leader stares at the newcomer...The two lock eyes....then the eyes of the Coywolf widen...In their eyes, they talk....)

Coywolf: “You are Other...”

(Daisy responds with nothing....then...)

Daisy: “As you once were....There is lupine in your blood...”

(The Coywolf begins to slowly circle Daisy...)

Coywolf: “There is much in my blood...Why are you here, uninvited...in my kingdom?”

Daisy: “The human inside...he is mine”

(The Coywolf chuffs....)

Coywolf: “Digusting....they are all....”

Daisy: “He is mine, abomination....”

(The Coywolf scans the dead bodies of his pack...a resignation comes over his muzzle)

Coywolf: “Then take him...I have no desire to fight you....”

(Daisy begins to circle, placing her body in between the Coywolf and the tent)

Daisy: “I am not giving you a choice”

Coywolf: “Some other time....it is not to be....”

Daisy: “Now”

(pause as they both circle now....)

Coywolf: “Why, Other....what is your fascination with this human?”

(Daisy looks back towards the tent...He sees his master, weak, drained, but Daisy also sees the dead ones killed by her master’s weapon...)

Daisy: “It would seem my master defended himself honorably...”

Coywolf: “Fortune...fortune favors the foolish....”

Daisy: “HE IS WARRIOR!..(pause) “ He is above all other men...His pack...they are similar....You have no conception of the courage and honor these humans possess...male and female both....”

Coywolf: “Female? It would seem, Other, that you have grown soft....”

(Daisy sees the Coywolf edging towards the camp site edge....She shifts her circling to cut off the animal’s retreat.....)

Daisy: “You threatened the one I love above all others...and now....”

(Daisy lowers her head...she begins to advance, slowly, one paw at a time, towards the Coywolf...)

Daisy: “...and now...you will pay the price....”

(Daisy sprints towards the Coywolf...the other animal runs towards her....They both leave the ground 10 feet from each other, meeting in the air in a cataclysmic clash of muscle, fury, teeth, and claws...The Coywolf drives its teeth straight at

Daisy's throat, its eyes gleaming in triumph as it can see the soft flesh in front of its jaws....then Daisy twists in the air sideways, feeling the Coywolves teeth graze her neck, then her own teeth and claws find the soft skin of the animal's belly as it passes by her face, clamping, tearing, twisting in the air again as the supremely powerful dog's body tenses then spins, the force of the spin combined with the power of the jaws, ripping the flesh off the stomach, the claws digging into intestines and pulling them outside the body of the Coywolf.....The pack leader is dead before it hits the flat rock, its body slamming onto the stone...the eyes open, glazed....Daisy lands....turns...spits the remains of her enemy's flesh out of her mouth....She raises her head...and in a sound not heard in that forest for over 2000 years, she howls the sound of ancient victory, of good vs evil, of what is natural over what is not....She raises her head and howls the same sound again....The sound echoes through the forest, animals everywhere stopping, listening, some trembling in fear, some hear it....and remember)

(scene shifts to the Ranger Station....The people listening anxiously....)

Ranger: "Eagle 1!...Status!..."

Radio: "WE JUST SAW A WOLF TEAR INTO A PACK OF COYOTES ATTACKING THE TENT!..."

(Caprice takes the mic....)

Caprice: "Casualties, Eagle 1?"

(silence...)

Radio: "Cappy?"

Caprice: "Yes Darren...it's Caprice....Now..How many dead coyotes?"

(silence)

Radio; "All of them...and there was a fight...my god, Cappy...between this wolf and I guess that Coywolf the park's been talking about....Jesus...I've never seen anything like that in my life!....The wolf tore that big Coywolf's stomach out!"

Caprice: "That's not a wolf, Eagle 1...that's our pet dog..."

Radio: "PET?..Okay, uh huh.....sure glad to hear that....because it's entering the tent now..."

(scene shifts to inside the tent....Daisy nuzzling, licking, whining as she finds Gibbs alive....Gibbs rubbing her neck, her ears, hugging his dog....)

Gibbs: “What a good girl....my Daisy....oh yea....girl, am I glad to see you...Good girl...who’s a good girl..huh? Huh?....”

(Daisy sniffs Gibbs’s side...her eyes turn towards his, then she whines...)

Gibbs: “It’s okay girl...I’m okay....”

(Gibbs coughs...then coughs in rapid succession...more blood come out onto this hand....Daisy sees the blood, darts out of the tent, looks up at the helicopter and begins frantically barking at it....)

(scene shifts to Ranger HQ...radio room...)

Radio: “Eagle 1 is lowering the basket and EMT now....”

Caprice: “Darren...you’ll have to bring our dog back with you...”

(silence....)

Radio: “WHAT? OH HELL NO!”

Caprice: “I don’t think she’ll give you much of a choice....By the way, what kind of snacks do you have onboard? You always had food when you flew for us....”

Radio: “Aw Cappy...just some ham jerky I got from my nurse friend at Walter Reed....that dog won’t like it....”

(laughter in the radio room from Caprice and Danny...)

Caprice: “You’re about to meet your new best friend, Darren....”

(scene shifts to inside the tent....The two EMT techs have loaded Gibbs onto a wooden board, strapped him, ready to carry him out to the waiting metal basket...Gibbs stops them...)

Gibbs: “My son...my boy....have you heard....”

(One tech looks at the other tech...)

Tech: “I guess you haven’t heard, Agent Gibbs...”

(Face alarmed)

Gibbs; ‘Heard what?”

Tech: “The story...hell, everyone’s heard the story by now....”

Gibbs; “TELL ME! HOW IS MY BOY?”

Tech: “Agent...Last night, that son of yours may have left this tent as a boy...But somewhere in between here and that Ranger station...” (pause) “...Sir, that boy of yours became a man....”

(scene shifts to the helicopter, Gibbs loaded, secured....pilot clicks his mic...)

Radio: “Eagle 1 enroute to Walter Reed”

Ranger: ”You got both passengers, Eagle 1?”

(Caprice looks at the speaker on the wall...)

Radio: “Affirmative....but I have one question...A boy that walked all night in the wood by himself..I got an Agent, fresh outa Gitmo in my chopper the same agent that yanked a President...they have a wolf for a pet. I just watched about a dozen coyotes die in a gunfight and a dog fight..and Cappy married that guy..”

Ranger: “Affirmative Ranger 1...What is your question?”

(silence)

Radio: “Just who the hell are these people?”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens at the Ranger station...Caprice and Danny thanking the people at the station for their help...Caprice and Danny begin walking to Caprice’s car....Cal is near the car, waiting...watching Danny...)

Cal: “Daniel...walk to me please...”

(Danny looks up at Caprice...she shrugs...Danny begins walking quicker than normal, more carrying his crutches than the crutches assisting him...Caprice sees it...)

Caprice: “Cal? Are you seeing....”

Cal: “Danny...come to me....”

(Cal kneels down...Danny reaches him....)

Cal: “Daniel...tell me if you feel....”

(Cal takes an ink pen...he pokes the back of Danny’s thigh....)

Danny: “OW!”

Cal: “Now here...”

(Cal repeats the process on the lower calf of one leg...)

Danny: “OW AGAIN!...Uncle Cal!...”

(Cal stands, steps around Danny, lifts up his shirt to see his bare back....)

Cal: “Daniel...stand up straight please...do not move....”

(Danny obeys...Cal begins running his fingers along his lower spine....)

Danny; ‘How bad did I mess it up, Uncle Cal...I know I did....”

(Cal looks at Caprice...he motions her to him....She arrives, her eyes wide in concern...)

Caprice; “Cal...did he hurt it worse?..Do we need to....”

Cal: “I want you to ask them to call another ambulance...”

Caprice: “CAl!..WHAT’S WRONG?”

(He takes her hand....he places it on Danny’s lower back....)

Danny; “HEY!...THAT TICKLES!”

Cal: “Feel the swelling?....”

Caprice; “Yes...but there shouldn’t be any pain...the nerves are deadened...the accident...”

(Cal runs his fingers along the spine again...)

Cal: “If you remember, when Daniel was thrown to the floor, it splintered his spine...the nerves to his legs lodged in the splinter, come work, and because of the pressure, some do not...”

Caprice: “Of course I remember!...They couldn’t remove them because of fear it would cut the nerves all the way!...Cal...what has happened?”

(He takes her hand...whispers....)

Cal: “Caprice...his fall down the hill...The nerves, for lack of better terms, jumped out of the bone crevice...they did not sever…do you understand that? They did not sever!”

(Her eyes get big....)

Cal: “The swelling is holding them away from the crevice...when the swelling recedes, they will move back into the same position...I have possibly 3 hours before that happens!...I need him in the O.R....NOW, CAPRICE!”

(Her face in shock....then her phone comes out....)

Caprice; ‘Ginny!..I need a second ambulance...and I need a full back board, neck board and head brace! I need to fully immobilize a young man, 12, black, 101 pounds...and prep the O.R. for Dr. Nuntio!...STAT!”

(Cal looks up at the helicopter flying over, carrying Gibbs....He whispers to the air...)

“Both horrible and wonderful...both women told me to accept...”

(He looks at Danny, his eyes wide with wonder and fear at the conversation he just heard....Cal embraces Danny, careful not to touch his back...)

Cal: “These women we have, son....We need to listen more...”

(Danny nods his head, still in awe....)

Danny: “I already knew that Uncle Cal...”

(Cal gives a small smile....)

Cal: “Indeed....Indeed you did, young man”

Season 29, Episode 1, “To Become A Man”

THE EPILOGUE

Narrated by Sam Elliot

Narrator:

Elliot: "The days that followed were full. What that means is up to you, but amigo, I promise you, they were full. I know...I was there"

PRESENT

(scene opens in Walter Reed Hospital, Operating Room, Danny laying on his stomach, anesthesia mask held to his face by elastic straps, a thin, blue covering over his body except for a foot of lower back. Cal stands over Danny, mask and eyepiece on, against his forehead... two nurses assisting, and standing on the other side of Danny, Dr. Cyril Taft stands....the beeping of the monitor sounded, both doctors looking at it, waiting for verification that the young man was fully under....Cal looks up at Taft...)

Cal: "How went it with our mutual friend?"

Taft: "Oh, you know...poke a hole, drain the blood and air out, look at the damage and wonder why he didn't die...You know the drill with Gibbs"

Cal: "So..it was Pulmonary Laceration?"

Taft: "Such a kind phrase....Lung lining torn to hell is a pretty accurate description, too"

Cal: "If I may ask, Dr. Taft....since you know Jethro much better than me...(pause) "How close was he...to...."

Taft: "Death?..Oh...I don't know, Cal,...maybe...3, 4 hours? He was bleeding out inside his body...air was collecting..."

(Taft shakes his head)

Cal: "It is a source of frustration for you...Is it not?"

Taft: "You get used to it. A man like Gibbs...."

(Taft shrugs)

Cal: “Yes...a man such as Jethro...who has a son that seems to be determined to follow his footsteps”

Taft: “And follow me into this room...The man refused to be operated on until he saw this boy here....I had the nurse knock him out”

(Taft stares at Cal for a moment....then...)

Taft: “I never thought I’d see the day Gibbs had a kid...or a wife, again....”

Cal: “You have known him through those times?”

(Taft nods)

Taft: “A lot of it...I’ve been patching Gibbs up for some time now. Sometimes the body, sometimes life”

(Cal looks at Taft....)

Cal: “You do know it was Jethro that demanded you operate on him?”

(Taft cocks his head.....)

Cal: “His words...if I may..”Taft has seen me shot up, blown up, and beat up”...(pause)..”He considers you, as do I, one of, if not the best, battlefield trauma surgeons, there is. And, in my estimation, he is correct...(Pause) “Now..Dr. Taft...the anesthesiologist has given us his consent....Please....assist me...”

(scene shows Cal holding the arthroscopic wand, Taft assisting by holding the flesh taught, the nurse standing next to Cal with the necessary pads and fillers....)

Cal: “Now....we hope....”

5 HOURS AGO

(scene shifts to Gibbs’s hospital room....Gibbs sitting up, Caprice by his bed, McGee standing in the room at the foot of the bed...)

Gibbs: “How long has it been?”

McGee: “They just started boss”

Gibbs: “Cal in there?”

McGee: “Yes...plus an army of nurses”

(Gibbs is silent....looks at McGee)

Gibbs: “He saved my life”

(McGee nods....Gibbs looks over at Caprice....)

Gibbs: “He saved my life”

(She nods)

(Gibbs looks out the window, grimaces in pain as he turns, begins coughing...then stops....)

Gibbs: “He walked miles in the dark...”

Caprice: “He did”

McGee: “Sure did, boss...brave boy....”

Gibbs: “Bravest”

McGee: “He has a good example to follow, boss...”

(Gibbs looks at McGee...curious....then...)

Gibbs: “I haven’t messed this one up....have I?”

(McGee shakes his head...)

McGee: “No boss....you’ve done great”

(Gibbs closes his eyes, leans back...McGee looks over at Caprice...mouths, “morphine?”...Caprice nods back....mouths ‘yes)

(Gibbs opens his eyes.....looks at Caprice...)

Gibbs: “He’s okay because of you”

Caprice: “No, Jethro....he’s okay because of us”

(He leans back again....nods...)

Gibbs: “Hope so”

(A pause...)

Gibbs: “How long has it been?”

(Dr. Taft walks into the room...)

Taft: “Gibbs...you ready?”

Gibbs: “No!..I want to wait until my son is out!”

Taft: “No can do, big boy....this has to be now....the O.R. for you was just prepped...Let’s go, tough guy! This is a short one...maybe one hour...You’ll be out and awake before Dr. Nuntio is done...”

(Gibbs scowls..)

Gibbs: “NO DAMMIT!”

(Taft and Caprice both nod to the nurse....she walks to Gibbs, syringe in hand....Gibbs looks at her....)

Gibbs; “Oh no...no no no...”

(The needle goes into his arm...)

(scene shifts to O.R....scene shows the fluoroscope screen of Danny’s back....the long needle can be seen pushing through flesh, entering the area of the damaged vertebrae...A bone splinter can be seen jutting out from the normal vertebrae area....Cal speaks into the microphone recording the session....)

Cal: “Entering the vertebrae channel now...The splinter is highly prominent and visible...I am looking now for additional fractures in the vertebrae”

(The camera on the probe relays the picture to the small screen, both Cal and Dr. Taft peering intently at the image....)

Cal: “No external fracturing visible....I am probing the fracture....”

(Taft holds up a hand...Cal stops the probe....Taft holds thumb and forefinger apart, slightly...Cal moves the probe slightly into the space between the crack and the vertebrae...Taft points his finger upwards...Cal moves the probe upwards....Taft holds his hand up....Cal stops....)

Cal: “What do you see?”

Taft: “Same fracturing I see due to explosive concussive....The area where the top of the splinter broke away from the main bone....look...tell me what you think”

(Cal moves the wand upwards...the healthy portion of the vertebrae can be seen....and so too can a minute fracture....)

Cal: “Confirming...”

(Cal looks over at Taft....nods....Taft nods back....Cal looks over at the nurse..)

Cal; “Prep for Kyphoplasty procedure....”

Nurse: “Already prepped Doctor Nuntio....”

(Taft looks over at Cal...)

Taft: “Those vertebrae are small....that’s a tricky injection, doc...”

(Cal nods....)

Taft: “Just for future reference, filling that gap with cement would work...Why are you spreading it with a balloon before the cement?”

(Cal looks at the monitor....then he points to the XRays of Danny’s back hanging on the wall next to them...)

Cal: “Notice the pelvic area....”

Taft: “Yea...it’s healthy”

Cal: “No fractures...unusual in this type of injury at so young an age”

(Taft stares at the pelvic images....then he looks up at Cal...smiles...)

Taft: “You’re thinking 6 years down the road, aren’t you?”

(Cal shrugs...small smile....)

Taft: “You’re widening the crack so you can clean out the entire crevice, not just block the nerves from settling back in....You’re strengthening this fracture to be able to withstand the pressures of Titanium bones in his leg!...We both see the strain of how he walks has worn down the femur....”

(Cal nods...listens....nods again...)

Cal: “What we do today, Dr. Taft....not only may allow this young man to walk.....”

Taft: “We increase the odds of his body taking the transplants once that femur begins to degenerate!...And it will!...”

(Taft grins..shakes his head....He turns away from Danny, then looks up....)

(scene shifts to a window running the length of the wall, 10 feet up...Several rows of benches can be seen, all filled with medical students....Taft turns, points to Cal...)

Taft: “This..What you’re watching?..., You that want to be surgeons?...This is why Dr. Caelesti Nuntio is regarded as the best damn neurosurgeon in the world!”

3 HOURS AGO

(scene opens in second O.R. room...Gibbs lays on the table, on his back, covered except for his chest...Dr. Taft begins to insert the long blue drainage tube into a small incision on the side of his rib cage...He looks away from Gibbs and up at the large monitor above them, the fluoroscope giving Taft real time XRay images of the tube as it enters the fluid buildup...)

Taft: “Pleural Disruption evident....now....”

(The tube moves deeper into the incision....)

Taft: “...no evidence of pneumothorax...thank god....uh oh....we have intrapleural bleeding..”

(moves the probe more)

Taft: “Blood collected between the pleural space and lung...”

(Taft looks down at Gibbs....)

Taft; “Hey Gibbs...you have bleeding inside you...What? What’s that you say?...Get it out?...”

(Taft moves the suction tube into the cavity...)

Taft: “Man’s always giving orders....”

(Drainage can be seen moving up the tube into the collection vessel...Taft looks at the amount of blood being drained....looks at Gibbs again...)

Taft: “You need to give your son an extra video game box, Gibbs....this would have killed you if we’d been an hour later...”

(Scene shows Taft and O.R. team working....monitor beeps....Taft continues to work...)

Nurse: “Doctor Taft...I can clean up...They are ready for you in O.R. 1”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens in Gibbs’s room.....Caprice sitting on Gibbs’s bed, Gibbs hooked up to tubes, breathing mask, monitors blipping, wires hooked to his chest....She watches her sleeping husband....)

Caprice: “I know this is stupid, Jethro, talking to you like this...but I’ve kind of gotten used to it...”

(She strokes his hand)

Caprice: “I know the man you are...and I know, no matter how hard you try, you won’t be able to change...God knows, you’ve tried. I give you credit for that, Jethro, but here we are again....”

(She leans over, adjusts his mask...sits back up)

Caprice: “God, I love you, Jethro....I don’t even know how to tell you how much....Even now, laying here, helpless...you’re still the most beautiful man I’ve ever known”

(She looks at the monitors, checking vitals....then back at him...)

Caprice; “I’ve resigned myself to the fact that we won’t grow old together....(pause) “God...I wanted that so much....But...I know it won’t be that way. I’ll get a call that you’ve been killed. Or I’ll be sitting here just like this...watching you fade away after someone has shot you...or stabbed you...blown you up...thrown you from an airplane....”

(She stops...)

Caprice: “Ignore that last one...it’s about the only way you haven’t almost, shoulda, coulda, died...”

(She brushes some hair off his forehead)

Caprice: “But I need you to know I’m okay with that. I know the man you are, and god, I wouldn’t change you if I could...You’re like some superhero that is getting less and less super, but he doesn’t know it. And that’s how you should go...being a superhero...To someone.”

(She wipes a tear...looks away...then back...)

Caprice: “So...here I am...again...watching over you like I do....Making sure you’re okay...”

(She gets up....)

Caprice: “Just know I love you. It’s all I know to do...And I’m okay with that”

(She kisses his forehead gently)

Caprice: “I’m going to go check on our son....he’s in recovery.....Same thing I’m doing here....just a different man I love”

(She walks away, leaving the room....scene shows Gibbs’s head turned towards her...his eyes open)

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens in Recovery Room, Danny’s bed behind a blue curtain, laying on his stomach, eyes closed, covered with a thin sheet..Caprice walks in, notices the sheet is falling off of him..she leans over, inspects the small incision, nods..”acceptable”...and covers him up to his shoulders...She pulls the chair in the area closer to the bed, leaning over, placing her arms on the mattress, then her head in her arms, turned sideways, looking directly into his face...)

Caprice: “I hurt for you like I’d carried you for 9 months”

(She looks for a response, gets none...)

Caprice: “When I think about you in that dark forest...all those animals...and Jethro back at the campsite, bleeding inside, I get scared just like I know you were scared.....”

(She says nothing for a few moments....then...)

Caprice: “You are such a beautiful boy....The men are talking about you becoming a man after this...It makes me well up with pride....And it makes me sad too. I’m not sure I’m ready to lose my little boy....Pretty soon, you’ll be calling me ‘mother’, or god...’ma’...please no....(pause) “You call me anything you want...So long as you know I love you...”

(She pulls the sheet up, looks at the incision again....)

Caprice: “There’s a chance your legs are going to be better...Baby, I hope so..But I worry about you if it doesn’t work. How will you feel? How sad will it make you?....”

(She stays silent...brushes her fingertips over his cheek....)

Caprice: “I just got through talking to your dad...He’s going to be okay...Thanks to you, my brave, heroic, superhero son....Just like your dad. I told him I was okay with the man he was. I told him I loved him just like he is....But you....”

(She stares at his face.....)

Caprice: “I worry about you wanting to be just like him. Part of me loves it...God, Danny, what better role model can a boy have than Jethro Gibbs? Throw in some Tim, some Nick, Dil,…(smiles) “Even Tony.....he’s a rascal, but he’s settled down....”

(She stops....blinks...)

Caprice: “Cal...you really like Cal a lot, don’t you?...(chuckles) “You could be like Cal and heal everyone, say funny things like ‘Indeed’...but the more I think about it, what a wonderful man he’s been...(her eyes narrow) “But don’t learn sweet talk from him...you’ll have every girl around hunting you down, wanting to marry you!...So no...Be like your dad...He doesn’t know how to flirt...And I’m going to make sure he never learns...”

(She smiles to herself)

Caprice: “So, my beautiful boy becoming a man....Be like your dad...Just not too much like him...I know you did what you did because you thought it was what he would do...And I get it...But baby...I’m selfish. I want you safe, always....and being like your dad means taking chances, running towards danger instead of away....”

(She closes her eyes, and finishes)

Caprice: “...so, my big beautiful boy....”

(her eyes still closed, she hears a groggy voice)

“I didn’t do it because of dad...Mom...I did what I knew you would do. You save people....(pause) “No matter what....”

(Caprice bolts upright, eyes wide.....Danny smiles at her)

Danny: “I just did what my mom would do....”

Caprice: “You’re awake!”

(groggily....)

Danny: “Ya think?”

(scene fades to black and white)

(scene opens in Hospital room, Danny and Gibbs together, their beds next to each other. Multiple monitors, wires, machines line each side of the beds, both are sleeping...Cal walks in quietly, begins inspecting the monitors...He moves to between the beds, and notices Gibbs’s arm laying over on Danny’s bed, touching the young boy’s shoulder...Cal looks at the image, and smiles..)

Cal: “The boy that became a man saving the man that loves the boy. I am glad to see both healing”

(Cal moves quietly back from between the beds...then stops...)

Gibbs: “Because of you”

(Cal looks at Gibbs....)

Cal: “My apologies, Jethro...I did not mean to wake you”

(In a quiet voice)

Gibbs: “He’s out...It’s a good sign...”

Cal: “And no one would know better than you...I am glad”

(Gibbs stares at Cal a moment, then pushes the button to raise his head up....)

Gibbs: “Thank you”

Cal: “You are welcome...but for what?”

Gibbs: “Everything you’ve done for my son...”

Cal: “It is what I do, good man, I was pleased to be...”

Gibbs: “No...you do more...”

(Cal doesn’t reply....then...)

Gibbs: “I’ve been unfair to you, Cal...I don’t understand you...I can’t get a handle on what you are, who you are....”

(Cal gives a small smile)

Cal: “I say that same thing to the mirror at times”

(As if Cal said nothing, Gibbs continues)

Gibbs:: ‘You’ve put yourself on the line several times. You’re a good man...A man I’m proud to call part of my family”

(The last phrase affects Cal....it shows on his face...he looks down....)

Cal: “Thank you, Jethro...I cannot describe fully how those words make me feel”

Gibbs; “I know”

(silence)

Gibbs: “And I know I’ve been part of making you feel like you’re not....”

(Cal looks at Gibbs in surprise...)

Gibbs: ‘I’m an ass, Cal....Hell, ask anyone...I’m arrogant, rude, unfeeling....”

(Cal cocks his head slightly to the side...)

Cal: “Humble, brave, protective, loyal, truthful....Those are the things I hear when people describe you”

(Gibbs closes his eyes....)

Cal: “You punish yourself too much, favored man....There is a forgiveness waiting...”

Gibbs: “You’re not about to start preaching to me, are you?”

(Cal chuckles)

Cal: “No...that is not my way....”

Gibbs: “Good...because the big man upstairs doesn’t know what to do with me...”

(Cal frowns....)

Cal: “Someday, Jethro...when you are ready...I will tell you exactly what the..’big man upstairs’ thinks of you....But until then, you have my respect and my love...”

(Gibbs nods....gives a small smile)

Gibbs: “Likewise, Angel boy”

(Cal laughs out loud....)

Gibbs: “She loves you, Doc...and I know you love her back...That makes me happy”

Cal: “And she loves you as well, good man....She sees the father she lost...A good and loving man that always protected his daughter....Much like you. But she also loves the man you are. It is through her eyes I began to see you....And truly see why you love this boy next to you”

(Gibbs looks at Danny)

Gibbs: “I do love him...Sometimes so much it’s scary”

(Gibbs leans back, closes his eyes....)

Gibbs: “Damn morphine makes me talk too much”

Cal: “Then listen....I have a request to make of you...”

(Gibbs looks at him for a moment....then...)

Cal: ”Though you will be released tomorrow, you need to rest for at least one week....It is imperative....Danny will be here for the next 3 days and nights...”

(Gibbs stares...then Cal looks at him...)

Cal: “Do you trust me, Jethro Gibbs?”

(scene fades to black and white)

NARRATOR:

Sam Elliot: ‘This is where I come in, amigos...Katharine and I were invited for a visit to the Ranch, to be what they call, “An objective judge”, to a shooting contest between Eleanor, Ziva, and Caprice. I think they just wanted Katharine to come out, seeing’s how she goes more often...In her words, “Sam...those are the most wonderful women...They don’t care one bit about celebrities...I love going to see them”...So, to be polite, I get asked to come too.

Anyway, I was there that day at The D Ranch. It was exactly one week since the young boy braved the dark, the father and dog fought coyotes, and well.....(pause) “Folks...it was a day I won’t ever forget. I’ll tell you how it happened, the best I can....Jethro and Caprice are pulling up to the Ranch....”

(scene opens in front of The D Ranch, other cars parked in the front...Caprice pulls the Jaguar up, stops...She exits, walks around to passenger door, seeing Gibbs already getting out...)

Caprice: “Jethro Gibbs!...Do not....”

Gibbs: “Dammit, McGibbs!..I’m a grown man!... I don’t need a nurse to..”

Caprice: “Don’t need a nurse? (louder) “DON’T NEED A NURSE?...Do you know why I’m the NCIS Field Nurse?...”

(Gibbs scowls..)

Gibbs; “Yea yea I know...because I keep getting shot up....”

Caprice: “Or stabbed..or blown up....”

Gibbs: “Or getting thrown out of an airplane.....”

(Caprice stops...her eyes get wide....in a low voice, Gibbs let out two words..)

“Uh oh”

(Caprice glares at him...

Caprice: “Were you listening Jethro? When I was pouring my heart out to you...thinking you couldn’t hear me!...Were you acting like you were asleep?.....(pause) “...JETHRO?”

(Gibbs looks at her confused....)

Gibbs: “Huh?”

Caprice: “Jethro Gibbs!...I ...You.....dammit Jethro...that was private...”

(He looks at her....then softly..)

Gibbs: “I heard you....actually...I listened....”

(She looks at him suspiciously....)

Caprice: “What do you mean?”

(He shrugs....)

Gibbs: “I want to grow old with you too...”

(Her face softens....then in a small voice)

Caprice: “Really?”

Gibbs: “Yea, McGibbs...really...I’m getting tired of that hospital”

Caprice: “Really?..I mean really, Jethro...”

(He shrugs again...)

Gibbs; “Yea..really”

Caprice: “When?”

Gibbs: “Like you and I agreed...6 months training the teams, then I'm done....”

Caprice: “5 months 2 weeks and 5 days...”

(He grins at her....)

Gibbs; “Come here, McGibbs...let’s practice being old....help me to the house...”

(scene switches to inside the house...Nell and Dez watching through the glass...)

Nell: “He’s still my Gibbsy!”

Dez: “Yep...they’re fussing then making up...thank god they didn’t...”

(scene shifts back to Gibbs and Caprice...She comes up to him, puts an arm around his waist,...He pushes her against the car, then kisses her....hard....)

(scene shifts back to Nell and Dez....both laughing....)

Dez: “Barf!”

Nell: “Barf!”

(They both get quiet, watch Gibbs and Caprice walk up...)

Nell: “I love how they love each other...”

(Dez shakes her head)

Dez: “Gotta agree with you there, sis”

Nell: “St Gibbsy.....”

Dez: “Mother Theresa Caprice”

(They look at each other....then...)

Nell: “That was barfy all by itself...”

Dez: “Come on cornball...let’s help him in”

(scene shifts to the back patio....Gibbs, Caprice, Nell, Dil, Torres, Bishop, Tali, Ahnjong, and Cal, sit at the long table. Sam and Katharine sitting across from each other....)

Gibbs; “Okay...can I please see my son now?”

Dez: “Cool your jets St Jethro...it’s only been two days...”

(Gibbs looks at her...mouths...”St. Jethro?”)

Caprice: “Jethro, you told Cal you trusted him....so...”

Gibbs: “It was the morphine!..”

Dil: “Brother...you know Samantha is a physical therapist...she’s a gymnast...she was and is the best person to help Danny heal....”

Gibbs: “She could have come to the house!...”

Dil: “Does your house have treadmills, whirlpool, weight room, massage table...”

Gibbs: “No...okay..I get it...I’d just like to see my son...I miss the guy!”

(He looks back at Cal...)

Gibbs: “How’s he doing....his legs were hurting when he left the hospital....”

Cal: “The process of the nerves getting used to feeling again....”

Gibbs: “But no more damage than was done before...it’s still that...right? Tell me I didn’t hurt him more...”

Cal: “You are correct...blessedly...you are correct...”

Gibbs: “Okay..So.....I just want to go see....”

(He gets up....)

Gibbs; “I’m going to go see him....”

(He turns to the group)

Gibbs; “Where is he? Hell, this place is bigger than most hotels!”

(Nell shrugs....Dez shrugs...even Caprice shrugs....Gibbs scowls, sits back down....)

Gibbs: “Assholes”

(Chuckles....Then....Samantha walks out of the French doors....)

Samantha; “Mr. Gibbs...?”

(Gibbs turns to her...looks behind her and sees Danny, his arms in his crutches, walking slowly out onto the patio....Gibbs looks at him, face struggling to not show disappointment....)

Gibbs; 'Son...we'll keep trying....."

(Danny looks up at his father....he stands up straight...and releases the crutches...they fall to the deck loudly...Gibbs's face goes into shock....)

Gibbs; "Oh god...."

(Danny takes a tentative step....then another step....)

Samantha: (whispering) "Back straight..."

(Danny straightens his posture....he looks at his dad...then his mom....and takes another step....then another....then another...All eyes turn to Gibbs, watching....)

Samantha; "He's been working so hard, Mr Gibbs...Mrs Gibbs...."

(Caprice is shown...bawling...Gibbs is still in shock...he gets up....)

Danny: "No dad...mom...I'll come to you..."

(The pain is on his face...but he takes another step, looking down at his feet...but still upright..his face riases up....he sees his dad, kneeling on the deck....He quickens his pace...and 4 steps later, he falls into his father's arms....and the father breaks)

Sam Elliot: "Those days were known by a lot of names...Some called it The Day A Boy Became A Man...others called it The Day Daisy Fought The Pack...but most of all, those in this family, these fine folks bonded in love and respect for each other, called it...

"The Day Gibbs Wept"

The End

"To Become A Man"