

Memories and DeJaVu

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Lee Stetson walked up the hallway toward the Q Bureau, a spring in his step and a smile on his handsome face. 'I must be developing a tolerance to that truth serum,' he mused. After the other four drug trials, he hadn't been fully conscious until late afternoon - and then he had felt foggy and exhausted for the entire evening. He hadn't even been able to drive himself home, much to his chagrin. Billy had to assign two agency trainees to escort him, one to drive his car and the other to give his driver a ride back to the agency. But not today! Today, he had been fully alert by 1pm, and he felt fantastic, almost euphoric. Like he had just awakened from a long, peaceful night's sleep full of pleasant dreams and was looking forward to... To what? He didn't know. He didn't recall anything he had looked forward to recently, and most of his dreams were more disturbing than pleasant. Especially the ones involving his partner, Amanda King. 'Stop right now, Stetson,' he chided himself. 'I am not going there! It's bad enough that I have thoughts like that while I'm asleep. I am NOT going to have them while I'm awake. How could I possibly have dreams like that about Amanda, for God's sake! I really need to spice up my social life.' He made a mental note to look through his little black books tonight and line up a date for Friday.

As he entered his office and sat at his desk, Lee shook his head and forced his mind back to the drug trials. He marveled again at how terrific he felt. It must have been a really easy interrogation, he decided. Maybe Billy had assigned one of those trainees to do it. He thought one of them had mentioned a class in Interrogations.

Lee closed his eyes and concentrated. As he had done after each session, he tried to remember something, anything, about the day's interrogation, but his mind remained stubbornly blank. Thinking about the interrogations was pointless. He hadn't even been able to remember who had conducted them, although he suspected that Francine had done

the third one. She had avoided him for days afterwards and had shot him disgusted looks at every opportunity. She had probably taken it as a personal insult if she hadn't been able to get any information out of him - which she obviously hadn't, or he wouldn't have been subjected to two more interrogations. He hadn't picked up a single clue from anyone other than Francine. Dr Quorn was always cheerful but guarded as he put the needle into Lee's arm in the morning and released Lee from the Lab in the afternoon. Billy had been just as uncommunicative when Lee checked in with him before and after each session. The only exception had been this afternoon, when Billy sputtered into his coffee cup as Lee said that he felt great and wouldn't need a ride home.

Lee had tried a couple of times to get Billy fill him in on the findings of the project, but his section chief had told him the results were "need to know" - and Lee didn't need to know. Lee had argued the point. After all, he hadn't volunteered to be a guinea pig: Billy had ordered him to participate. Lee didn't like the idea of people playing around inside his head. It made him uncomfortable enough to have no control over the process; why couldn't he have access to the results? The other agents at least knew they had broken, since they had been released from the study before the arbitrary "five interrogation limit" set by Dr. Quorn. Lee didn't even know that much. Well, he must not have broken in the first four sessions, but he didn't know what had happened this morning.

Lee was still sitting at his desk, frowning with his effort to remember, when the office door opened. Amanda King paused in the doorway and smiled hesitantly. "Hi," she said. "I finished the Jordak report, and I thought you might want to look it over before I give it to Mr Melrose."

"Oh, yeah. Thanks. " Lee grinned. For some reason, it felt really good to see Amanda. She always managed to make him feel better when something was bothering him. As he reached for the folder Amanda was holding, he noticed she was looking particularly pretty today. He also noticed she was acting a little shy as he looked at her steadily, a slight blush stained her cheeks.

Was it possible Amanda had done the interrogation? The idea seemed absurd, but why else would she be looking at him that way? They were friends; there was no reason for her to be self-conscious around him. Unless she was hiding something... Setting the folder down, he eyed her casually for a moment longer before asking nonchalantly, "So, what have you been doing today?"

Lee thought Amanda looked guilty for a split second, but she responded quickly. "Oh, well, I've been working on that report for almost three hours. It really shouldn't have taken so long, but I had trouble reading your handwriting on a couple of pages of notes, and then I accidentally hit the delete button and had retype part of it. And then I went over to

steno to see if they had finished the wiretap transcription you wanted to attach, but they hadn't even started it, so I did it myself." Amanda shrugged and gave him a nervous smile.

Watching her closely, Lee didn't think she was lying. When he had stopped in the Q Bureau this morning before heading down to the Medical Lab, the file had been on his desk, and the report hadn't even been started. He was certain it would have taken *him* over three hours to turn his notes into a coherent report. Besides which, Amanda almost never told him out and out lies; most often, if she didn't want to admit something, she changed the subject or "answered" his question with a question of her own.

On the other hand, she usually rambled when she was flustered, and one of her hands was nervously twisting her heart-shaped pendant. For a moment, he was distracted by the vision of her slender fingers against the deep red of her sweater. Red was a good color on her. It brought a warm glow to her skin and darkened her soft, brown eyes. Thinking of her eyes caused hazy memory to float through his mind, but he couldn't quite bring it into focus. Shaking his head again in an effort to clear it, he decided to steer the conversation into safe territory. "Is that a new sweater?"

"This sweater? Oh, uh, yeah. I just bought it last night. There was a big sale at Arlington Mall. A lot of stores had 50% off sales, and Mother really wanted to go. She thought we might be able to find some new jeans for the boys; they really wear out jeans fast." Amanda stopped suddenly in mid-ramble and smiled apologetically. "That's probably more than you needed to know."

"No problem," Lee said slowly. For some reason, now that he thought about it, her sweater looked vaguely familiar. He was almost certain he had seen it before, but if she had just bought it last night.... No, he was being ridiculous. She couldn't have done the interrogation and the report at the same time. But why was she acting so nervous?

Picking up the folder, Lee began to glance idly through the neatly typed pages. As he did so, he could sense Amanda backing slowly toward the office door. "Well, I'm sure you're busy, and I don't want to bother you, so I'll just be going," she said.

Lee spoke without thinking. "You're not bothering me. I like having you, uh." He paused, slightly confused by the thought he had almost revealed. Looking across at Amanda, he could see that her eyes had widened. "I mean," he began again, "I like having someone to type up my reports."

"Right. Thanks. I'm glad I could help. Look, I have to get going. Mr. Melrose told me I could take off a couple of hours early today. I have a parent-teacher conference at Jamie's school. But I promise I'll finish the Waterhouse report for you first thing

in the morning." Without waiting for him to respond, she quickly slipped out into the hallway and closed the door behind her.

Promise? Promise? Lee's brow furrowed in concentration as he again tried to focus on a shadowy memory. Hadn't Amanda promised him something else? For the life of him, he couldn't recall what it might have been. With a sigh, he decided he must be more tired than he had realized. He would go home and take a nap. Thinking of his earlier plan to spend the evening with his little black books, he decided he wasn't feeling up to the effort. Maybe he would invite Amanda to have dinner with him Friday night. Yes, that was just what he needed: a nice, relaxing dinner with a good friend. And maybe she had heard something about the DeJaVu research. She was really good at picking up bits and pieces of information around the Agency; she even did data entry for the Medical department occasionally, when things were slow in Field Section. Well, if she knew something, he would get it out of her. He grinned as he grabbed his car keys and headed toward the office door. First, he would need a good bottle of wine....

The end.