

## The Good Guy

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Contents: A bad boy is fascinating, for some time. But nothing compares to a true gentleman. Episode tag to "Rose-Colored Glasses".

Disclaimer: Nothing mine. Bruno Heller and his team definitely deserve to be the rightful owners, as they had made so many great things with this show 'til now.

She had always found good apologies to not attend any high school reunions that had occurred since her school-leaving exam sixteen years ago. Occurred quite often; her former schoolmates seemed to love these events - while she herself rather spent time in an interrogation room with a serial killer.

The last time she had attended an event like this one had been her prom - after that, she'd grown up and into a woman who disliked the thought of seeing the girls, women, no, over-styled dolls she knew they still were - she'd had seen photos on a website - again, and who, more importantly, had realized that she didn't need them. Once she might have tried to become friend with them, because she had wanted to belong to the popular girls. Today she knew that they had never liked her, her, Teresa Lisbon, the ugly duckling who preferred sports and training over make-up and dress-up, and always scorned her.

Dancing at a high school reunion had been something she had thought she would never ever do. And yet here she was - held gently in the strong arms of her team's consultant and her personal pain in the ass she nevertheless didn't want to miss in her life. Work life, of course. At least that was what she told herself and tried to convince herself of.

It had been the song that had once been one of her favorites that had lead her to let her guard down for just a second, but Patrick Jane hadn't needed more. *More Than Words*; it reminded her of lonely nights in her room, nights of dreaming of the one guy she had adored so much for almost her whole time at high school. Dreaming and hoping that he would notice her. Falling in love with her. Ceremonially declaring his feelings for her in front of everyone...

Oh dear.

Thinking back to those times, she somehow felt ashamed. She had been young and stupid and it had taken her ages to see the truth behind the attractive façade.

The teasing words from Jane from only a few moments ago, meant to challenge her into dancing with him, suddenly bothered her. Because something was wrong about them. Terribly wrong.

Turning her head, Lisbon let her face rest in the crook of his neck.

"You know," she began, whispering and thus barely audible due to the music, "at high school, you wouldn't have been that guy you described. The mean, cold-hearted guy I used to worship from afar, but never talked to."

"So there actually was such a guy?" Jane chuckled quietly and earned himself a pinch from his boss. He supposed he was lucky it was only a gentle pinch.

"Every girl at high school had such a guy. Well, not had, but... Anyways. Yes, there was one. Drop-dead gorgeous, every girl loved him. But, he was a real... ass." She had lowered her voice for the last word, and rolled her eyes when she more felt than heard Jane laugh lightly. A comment on that from him was inevitable.

"Surprise. So you longed for this incredible handsome jerk. Got that. May I guess the reason why I wouldn't have been that type of guy?"

She pulled back her head from his shoulder and looked at him with a raised eyebrow. He only smirked.

"I'm... not handsome?" Lisbon almost groaned when he smiled winningly. Talking about jerks with oversized egos.

"Well, since you're obviously a jerk, it has to be one of the other things," she replied and only with a lot of effort withstood the urge to stick out her tongue. The scenery must have reactivated her adolescent behavior and faded from her high school days.

"I'm hurt," he said with a melodramatic hint in his voice, before his forehead crinkled as he pretended to be deep in thought. "It's either the *drop-dead gorgeousness*," he emphasized the words as he quoted her, "or being mean and cold-hearted, or you desiring me. Two things true, one wrong." He pondered a moment longer, then looked at her frowning. "I do hope you don't think of me as not being handsome."

Teresa really wanted to be serious during this little game of theirs. But she simply couldn't. She was shaking with giggling laughter and couldn't help it. It were exactly those quirks of his that lightened up her days. She was wise enough to not tell him, but that didn't mean she couldn't think like that.

"I'm not sure whether this laughter is good," Patrick commented, before suddenly leaning closer, his lips almost touching her ear when he added in a very low voice, "but, in case I haven't told you before, you're very beautiful when you laugh."

His capability of changing moods and behavior at light speed never ceased to amaze her. One moment he spoke the words with a voice and tone that made her stomach flip, the next he pulled back and was back to his mischievous self that was still trying to answer the question which characteristic he lacked to be the guy that had once bewitched young Teresa Lisbon.

"Well then, are you going to let me roast, or are you helping me a bit?"

"Okay... you look quite good?" she offered, this time with enough seriousness to allow her seeing Patrick Jane's confidence waning for a fraction of a second. More a fraction of a fraction of a second, but she had learned to take what she got and be happy with it a long time ago.

"Was that a question?"

"No, sorry, that was a statement actually. So, you look quite good. Better?" Now she could add looking crestfallen to the waning confidence. Made it two fractions of a second. She was getting better.

"Still thinking about it..." A contemplating Jane who was just the tiniest bit unsure was, as she had to admit, adorable. But torturing people she liked in any way had never been something she enjoyed.

"Jane," she so finally began in a calm voice with a hint of seriousness in it, "you wouldn't have been the mean, cold-hearted jerk. You're far too good and kind for that. Whatever happened in the past, while you pretended to be a psychic, I know you're not a bad person. You have some annoying attitudes, maybe sometimes more of them than would be good for you. But I can see you care for those who mean something to you, and as we know from our job all too well, it's nothing that comes to a person naturally." Lisbon smiled when she saw the look of clear wonder

and surprise settling onto the consultant's face. Her words had been unexpected; she knew he was aware that she, despite all their disagreements, liked and respected him. But he probably hadn't thought she would ever say it out loud.

The blond-haired man was astounded, to say at least. She thought of him as a good person.

Only for a short moment Rigsby's face appeared before his inner eye. No. The blackmailing had been for a greater good. No blames here.

Jane coughed slightly. Damn conscience; where did that come from?

"I'm glad to hear that. That tells me I'm not the jerk, which leaves me with the other two-"

"Don't even think about it!" she warned him before he could end the sentence. And the look in her eyes told him that he would die a slow and painful death should he even consider speaking out loud that it must mean she had a crush on him.

He wisely kept his mouth shut, but nevertheless sighed theatrically.

"Spoilsport," he mumbled under his breath, ready to grant her the title of the winner of their teasing match - when another idea entered his mind.

The next thing Teresa knew was that his face was coming closer. In slow-motion, as it seemed, making it all the more... she didn't know. It was an indefinable feeling that was claiming her, something she would have been incapable to describe even if she had had more time.

Patrick Jane was going to kiss her. That was the only thing she knew. The kiss she never got at prom he was going to give her. And she had exact one second to decide whether she wanted it or n-

... Probably it had been less than a second.

She never finished the thought - she never even managed to get hold of any clear thought - before his lips touched her. But not as she had expected them to. Instead he left a gentle kiss on her cheek, very close to, yet not *on* her lips. It was simple, and it was harmless.

And it was the perfect ending for the best high school-related dance she ever had. Even though their dance had been forgotten some time ago during their banter and flirting, and the song had ended a long time before.

But wasn't that what in the end all this was about?

END