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JORJA'S RULES

'CSI' STAR REFUSES TO DIE

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Jorja Fox and William Petersen examine what's left of her career.

JORJA Fox was supposed to die at the end of "CSI" this year - but she has refused to show up on the set to film her "death scene," according to a published report.

A salary dispute with CBS was at the bottom of the unusual stand-off.

Unhappy with Fox's demands, execs decided to kill off her "CSI" character, Sara Sidle, who's romantically involved with boss Gil Grissom (William Petersen).

Fox was scheduled to film Sara's death scene late last month, when her character was supposed to be crushed by a car for the May 17 season finale.

But Fox refused to show up on the set, according to a report that first appeared in the Star.

It forced the show to film an alternate ending - including last-minute script rewrites and flying co-star Marg Helgenberger from L.A. to Vegas for re-shoots,

Fox's rep told The Post yesterday that the actress' future on the show was indeed up in the air.

"Her contract is up and they are in conversations," said the spokeswoman.

The spokeswoman insisted however that Fox did appear on the set to shot the eventual finale, which she called "open ended."

CBS officials declined to comment yesterday.

The re-shoots, done on location over a weekend, cost CBS a bundle - pushing up costs on a show that, because of its heavy reliance on special effects, is already expensive to produce.

This was not Fox's first salary dispute with the show.

In 2004, she and co-star George Eads, who plays Nick Stokes, were fired by CBS after refusing

to come to work during a contract dispute.

They were re-hired a few days later.

Fox reportedly rakes in \$100,000-per-episode and was demanding a "major raise."

CBS reportedly offered her a "moderate raise," which she balked at.

The gap-toothed Fox, who turns 38 in July, has starred on "CSI" since the crime show launched in 2000.

"CSI" has launched two successful spinoffs, "**CSI: New York**," starring Gary Sinise, and "**CSI: Miami**," starring David Caruso.

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