



Disconnect

Rating: PG

Classification: vignette

Spoilers: "Complications," "Heroes," "Adrift"

Summary: A follow-up to the bar conversation in the eighth-season episode "Complications." Singer's POV.

Author's Notes: Let it be known that I do NOT actually see Harm like this! I just see how Singer could, given her somewhat skewed view of the world. That's why it's called "Disconnect" - she just doesn't get it. Harmy board members, please don't kill me!

Damn him.

If I study human nature for a hundred years, I will never understand that man. Could he be any more judgmental and self-absorbed if he tried? Based on one non-answer to an unjustified question weeks ago, he's somehow seized onto this baby as some kind of personal crusade. That's precisely what it is, too -- a very, very personal quest to rescue his supposed blood relative from its heartless mother. Well, gee-whiz, that's so noble I could cry.

The rest of the staff would probably give him a medal for it, too. God, the level of adoration this group has for their resident problem child is stunning. When he wins, he's the second coming of Clarence Darrow. When he screws up -- and he does, frequently and in spectacular fashion -- he's "just being him." When he jilts them for a more glamorous job, they welcome him back. When he deserts his purported best friend on the eve of her wedding and demolishes everyone's first fleeting moment of happiness and normalcy in ages ... they weep at his damn bedside. And then he just gets right up and goes on about his business like the world stopped for him. How is it that nobody seems to see those oh-so-revered gold wings as the ultimate symbol of selfishness?

There seems to be a widespread belief that passion is a desired trait in a lawyer. No one seems to understand that calm, analytical thinking works far better than amateur dramatics in front of the jury box. I guess I could blame TV and movies for that misconception, but in this case, I blame him, too. For Christ's sake, he fired a fully automatic weapon in the courtroom! I wish I could attribute that legend to office rumor and exaggeration, but I looked up the records. And what did they do to him after this blatant disregard for regs and safety? They slapped him on the wrist and docked his pay. Someone needs to hold him accountable for the stunts he pulls -- someone really needs to tell him that he's not living in a Tom Cruise movie -- but no one ever does. They admire him all the more for it. Try as I might, I can't wrap my mind around that.

He's made it perfectly clear what he thinks of me. He gets the benefit of the doubt in every situation, but I don't get a scrap of consideration from him. I could vanish into thin air tomorrow, and were it not for the fact that I'm carrying a child to whom he feels some connection, he'd probably be the first to pop the champagne. And let's be clear about one

thing: it's not just the fact that there's a baby involved here. That, at least, I could try to respect. But if he hadn't gotten fixated on the idea that his brother fathered it, there's no way he'd be so gung-ho. No, he's trying to play the "I don't want this baby to have the same troubles I did" card. On the surface, that sounds all right, but all it does is bring the focus back to him. Poor thing -- he lost his father. You know what? Lots of people have. And last I checked, there were much worse things in this world than growing up with a rich stepfather. So what if he didn't like the guy? He got out soon enough, didn't he? All the right schools, all the right billets, all the right holes punched on his express ticket to the Judge Advocate General's chair. Yeah, life's been hell, hasn't it? Most people are lucky to find one job they can do decently. He wrecked up one, and they gave him another. Sorry, sir, but I'm not showing up to that pity party.

And I think offering to take the baby was just about the last straw for me. Just like that, he says, "Give it to me, then." Again, how noble of him. He offers to mitigate my stigma of being a single mother, knowing full well that he wouldn't face any for adopting. It's amazing. First I'm evil for not wanting to have the baby, then I'm evil for agreeing to keep it only for a few more months. Like he really wants me to keep it permanently? Like he's got complete faith in my maternal abilities? News flash: sometimes biological ties aren't enough to make a family work. If they were, maybe his brother would still be here.

Why should I give it to him instead of someone who wants it? The idea of JAG's own Sir Lancelot schlepping a diaper bag and strapping a car seat into that Corvette is about as realistic as the idea of me winning an office-wide popularity contest. There's no way he'd really be able to put someone else's needs ahead of his own like that. He wouldn't fare any better than I would at the parenting game.

Would he?

No. No way. At least, I don't think so.

Oh, hell, I don't know.

Forget it. Go back to your airplanes, Harmon Rabb. Up there, you've got a convenient system to help you paint your contacts as friend or foe, so your rigid moral absolutes might actually work. You won't be bothered by the complexities of all the little people you can't see. And up there, you'll really be as far above us all as you think you are.

*** THE END ***