

Title: Dinners

Author: Frumpy

Rating: G

Spoilers: For Unbearable

A/N: I'm not abandoning the other story, but this was nagging at me for some reason. Consider it fairly AU, but that dinner invitation just irked me for the obvious Sweeps stunt that it was. So this is my Sweeps contribution, about as plausible as Grissom asking the Spork to dinner was... ;)

"You what?"

Gil Grissom actually jumped in his seat as the screeching voice penetrating his concentration unbiddingly. He jumped again when the door to his office was thrown shut, the glass panel rattling dangerously. Before he could even register what was happening, Catherine's face was looming only inches in front of his. Her hands on his desk were formed to fists, and the gleam in her eyes was not pleasant either.

"What the hell were you thinking, Gil? Or were you thinking at all?"

"Cath..." He started to lean back in his seat, desperately trying to make sense of what could have possibly brought this on.

"Don't you 'Cath' me, Gil Grissom. Don't pretend to be oblivious, for I sure know you aren't when you deem it worthwhile."

Grissom blinked and opened his mouth to say something, but didn't even stand a chance.

"You know, I've always told you to become more politic. Never would I have thought you'd go and betray me! How could you, Gil? You had dinner with her?"

That brought a frown to his face. "What..."

"I thought we were friends, I thought we had each other's back. Instead you go behind my back and... and..."

Grissom was quickly losing the last shred of patience he could muster at being railroaded like that. "And what, Catherine?"

She threw her head back and let out a high-pitched laugh. "Don't play dumb with me, Gil. You. Sophia. Dinner. Why? Why are you doing this? What have I done to deserve this?"

Grissom took off his glasses and ran a hand over his eyes. "Please sit down, Catherine."

"Like hell. Explain yourself."

His eyes flashed angrily and he pointedly looked at the chair in front of his desk, not asking this time. After Catherine had sat down reluctantly he took a deep breath and leaned forward. "What exactly are you accusing me of?"

"Don't..."

He held up a hand before she could start again, releasing a breath through clenched teeth. "Okay. Let's try this again. What, and I mean it, are you accusing me of?"

Catherine leaned back, regarding him through slitted eyes. "Let me repeat then. You. Sophia. Dinner." She let that sink in, watching him frown and then look up at her.

"You think?" Grissom licked his lips slowly. "Catherine, that was just that. A dinner. Nothing..."

"You want me demoted, don't you? I knew it, from the start. No wonder I never got Days.

That completely blindsided him, and where he had been able to swallow his indignation before, he was just tired of Catherine Willows always assuming the worst of him. "What the hell are you talking about?"

Catherine noted how quiet he had gotten and saw actual anger in his eyes, but she was too far gone to care by now. "What were you plotting with her, huh? What's she getting? Days? Swing?"

"Careful, Cath."

"I shouldn't have trusted you. All these years, and then..."

His palm connected smackly with his desk, and the loud crack actually startled Catherine enough to shut her up. Grissom swallowed, closing his eyes, and then regarded her calmly. "Sophia wanted to leave. Nightshift already is understaffed - she's a good CSI, I didn't want to lose her. She promised to give me a two-weeks notice before leaving, so I'd have the chance to find a replacement. I had a steak, she had a fish platter. My beer was too warm. Shall I call you next time and ask permission, Supervisor Willows?" He drew out the last two words and then set his jaw, waiting.

Flustered, Catherine avoided his gaze and blinked a couple times, before actually looking at him sheepishly. "I just..."

"I know what you thought. And frankly, I am tired. When did I ever not have your back?" He held up his hands again, warding off any explanation she might have given. "No. I don't care for that right now."

Nodding, Catherine got up slowly. "I'm sorry." Not getting a response she walked towards his door.

"Cath."

She turned and saw that his gaze had softened. "Don't sell yourself short. You're a good supervisor, just don't try too hard. And cut back on the paranoia, you've been around Ecklie too much."

She flashed a small but grateful smile, and opened the door.

Grissom sighed deeply after she left, and picked up his glasses again. 'Where was I?' Flipping open the case file he had been working on before, he resumed reading, getting lost in it again.

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Sara watched Grissom for a moment before entering his office. Walking straight to the chair in front of his desk as had become her habit lately, she flopped down in it and smiled at him openly. "Heard about you and Catherine."

He nearly rolled his eyes. "Yeah, well, you know Catherine."

Sara smirked at that. "She actually thought you had a date with Sophia?"

"No. She thought I was plotting to get her demoted."

"Oh." Sara thought for a moment. "I would have preferred the other."

Frowning, Grissom closed the file. "Why is that?"

Smiling, Sara shrugged. "Would have meant she doesn't suspect a thing."

Turning off the desk lamp, Grissom got up. "She doesn't." He took his jacket and walked around to where Sara was sitting. "So, dinner?"

"I'd love to." She took his proffered hand and got up.

"Your place or mine?"

Flipping the light switch on her way out, Sara smiled. "Surprise me."

The end