



After The Mirror

Gargoyles (Cartoon) · Not Rated · 2547 words

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After The Mirror

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After using intense amounts of magic in Demona's disservice, all Puck wants to do is take a nap. Unfortunately, he happens to share his brain with the world's most dedicated workaholic.

As far as I see it, there's three ways to interpret Puck/Owen.

- 1) Puck is the actual guy, Owen is just an act/mask.
- 2) It's one guy, but he thinks/acts/feels slightly differently depending on whether he's Puck or Owen.
- 3) Puck and Owen are each alive in their own right, and have to share their body.

This fic (which I found in my old notes and edited) uses interpretation number three.

Chapter 1: A Brief Description Of Puck And Owen's Room

Feel free to ignore this chapter, it's literally just telling you what their bedroom looks like and isn't actually important.

The bedroom was a mixture of the two personalities, the one space where they each could be themselves.

Fantasy posters were neatly organized along grey walls, along with framed travel guides from across the world. The wide window sill was covered in plush pillows, forming a nook to read any one of many books sitting neatly on the shelves.

A desk was near the door, holding a computer and a small collection of snowglobes, sorted by size. A potted plant sat in the corner, and various lamps with unusual lampshades were scattered throughout the room.

The plain grey bed had only a thin grey blanket and a single flat, rectangular pillow. The carpet underneath was fuzzy and red, soft on one's feet. Along one wall was a white board with various very important notes held up by animal magnets.

Chapter 2: Bedtime

Puck floated above his bed, staring at it.

What's the matter? Owen mentally grumbled. *I thought you were tired?*

"I am tired." Puck replied out loud. "Those stupid chains drained me."

Then why aren't we napping? Owen asked. Better yet, *why aren't we **me**?*

"Because you'll insist on finishing up work first." Puck said in a tone he'd never admit was fond. He pouted. "It's bad enough that you won't let me sleep in."

What part of 'lifetime of service' do you not understand? Owen asked, for what felt like the billionth time in his short life. *You designed me to be the perfect servant. Besides, if we sleep in, we can't bring Mr Xanatos his morning coffee. If we don't bring him his morning coffee, he'll be too grumpy to tell us his latest plans. You **love** diabolical scheming time.*

"I know I do." Puck sighed, still giving his perfectly made bed a death glare. "How can my own creation be a better servant than I am?"

Perhaps the fact that Mr Xanatos shares our sense of humor and Oberon doesn't has something to do with it? Owen suggested drily. *Now, get to bed. I'm getting us up at six whether you sleep or not.*

Puck muttered something under his breath.

What?

"I hate your bed!" Puck not-quite-yelled, shooting straight up into the air and flipping around. "It's all stiff, and straight, and perfect for your muscley back. But I just know it'll give me a crick in the neck if I even try to sleep on it."

How could you possibly know that? We've never slept on it while being you. Owen pointed out, exasperatedly adding *We could just be me.*

"No, no, I'll figure... Something out." Puck's gaze traveled over to their closet, a smile creeping up his face. He floated over and dragged out a large tub from the very back. "Hey, remember that one Christmas where Bossy pranked you by spreading that rumor about you liking really colorful quilts?"

Yes, it was very *amusing*. Owen said flatly, his voice as bland as ever. When the tub was upended and a dozen-or-so quilts spilt onto the floor, his voice took on a distinctly angry (and loud) tone he reserved especially for Puck. *What do you think you're doing?!*

"Relax, you can clean it up in the morning." Puck rolled his eyes and began arranging the quilts in a makeshift nest. "You love cleaning things up."

I have a feeling you made my that way just so I'd clean up your messes. Owen grumbled, but made no further complaint as his counterpart threw their collection of pillows on the blanket pile. He purposefully ignored the flat, grey ones in favor of the plump, colorful ones.

Puck threw the thin, grey blanket into the air, twirling it around himself and plopping down with a contented smile, wrapped tightly in a cocoon of his own making. He snuggled deeper into the nest, a little sigh escaping him as he fell asleep.

An hour later, he woke up to the computer insistently beeping and Owen yelling at him to check his email.

Chapter 3: Xanatos

I think I'm getting a bit more used to referring to Xanatos by his first name when writing. Still weird, though.

David Xanatos woke up to his phone ringing at four in the morning. He angrily checked the caller, saw it was Owen, and answered immediately. Owen would never wake him up this early unless something was wrong.

"Owen, what's the matter?" David whispered, trying not to wake Fox, who was quietly laying beside him.

"Hey Bossy- Sir." The voice that answered him was... not quite Owen's. "I'm afraid there's been an incident- and it's your fault! I mean, please come to my room, Sir-NOW! My apologies, but it's quite urgent. See ya soon, Boss Man. Goodbye, Sir." Click, the phone hung up.

David rubbed the bridge of his nose, already getting a headache. He'd only heard Owen like this once before, when Puck had stolen David's credit card to buy David a birthday present, because that made sense in the fey's mind. The paired beings' arguing had lasted for a week.

David stood in the doorway to Owen's room, leaning against the doorframe with a cocked eyebrow, barely trying to hide his amusement at the sight before him.

Puck sat crossed-legged in the middle of the floor, but it wasn't quite Puck. He was somewhat taller and more muscular, his ears smaller and rounder. His hair was very light blonde, sitting just past his shoulders, and he was wearing Owen's glasses along with a loosely-knotted red tie.

Around Puck was a variety of scattered papers and a computer, an espresso machine that David was almost entirely sure wasn't a normal addition to the room floating above his head. He scowled up at the human.

"This is all *your* fault!" The voice that shouted at him was mostly Puck's, with a little of Owen's normal baritone. Puck coughed and the voice got much deeper, though still not quite Owen's. "Uh, Mr Xanatos, Sir."

"What's my fault?" David asked.

"That we're up right now, instead of napping!" Almost Puck's voice whined, starting to ramble. "And I really need a nap; I just spent most the night bound in iron -- which reminds me, Demona turns human during the day now -- and, while it was kinda fun, I've done like a hundred different really complicated spells and I'm tired. But your stupid company just had to send a stupid email about stupid business things at a stupidly early hour, and now stupid Owen won't let me nap until it's all taken of, but we'll have to wake up in two hours anyways, and I've only gotten an hour of sleep, and *please make him let me rest!*"

This last bit was accompanied by the elf dramatically throwing himself at David's feet, whimpering and looking up at him with puppy-dog eyes.

It took David a minute to make sense of the increasingly-rapid rant, but once he did, he straightened in shock. "Wait, Demona what now? And what do you mean you were bound in iron? Are you alright?"

"No, I'm not alright, I'm exhausted!" Puck pulled at his own hair as he sat back up, adjusting glasses he wasn't used to needing. "Do you even know how many spells I did tonight? Memory rewrites, species transfers, magical barriers, mental hazing, *changing camera feeds* -- that's not even close to everything I had to do to cover it up. But all that's Puck knowledge, and I'm not supposed to give you Puck knowledge. Our deal, remember?"

"Why are you even doing business stuff?" David asked. At the mention of their contract, he knew his faithful assistant wouldn't tell him anything more about whatever he'd gotten up to last night. "Why not just let Owen do it and go to bed?"

The voice that came out was nearly Owen's, a bit lighter and faster, but just as flat and imperceptibly annoyed as ever. "Because, Sir, we have to wake up at six. We don't have enough time to get a significant amount of sleep."

"So, just sleep in." David shrugged, not really seeing the issue. In retrospect, he should've known Owen better than that.

Puck/Owen tensed, both voices ringing out at once, Puck's tired and hopeful while Owen's was clipped with a dull dread. "Is that an order?"

"Does it have to be?" Might've been the absolute worst question for him to ask, but in his defense, he was still partly asleep.

The voice dropped and rose, pingponging between the two personalities as they answered. "A lifetime of service, he'll listen to you- but, Sir, there's too much to do in the morning- but if you order him, I get to nap- do you even really need a na- yes! But you just have to be obsessed with work and schedules an- of course I am, you made me that way!"

With a growl, the voice switched almost entirely to Puck, who looked up at David pleadingly. "I did a lot of magic while weakened by iron, I need rest. At six, Owen will start yelling in my head until I get up and turn into him, because he hates missing work. I'm asking, no, *begging* you to order him to let me sleep in. Please."

David felt a pang of sympathy, knowing just how dedicated Owen was to his work. As fond as he was of the man, he was glad he didn't have to share brain space with the workaholic. "Okay, I'll order Owen to let you sleep in."

A groan of defeat echoed simultaneously with a cry of joy. The grin that formed on his face dropped just a little at David's next words, "On one condition."

"Alright, fine, but it can't be anything magical." Puck answered. "Even if it wasn't for our deal, I'm way too drained... to..." His eyes flickered to the floating espresso machine, and he chuckled a little sheepishly. Okay, so maybe he wasn't quite as drained as he was making it out to be. But he was still tired, and fey were known for being over-dramatic. And Owen started it.

David nodded. "Owen, finish up here, then you're taking tomorrow off to rest. I'll need you around 19:00 tomorrow, but no work until then." He paused, smirking. "Puck, I expect Owen to have a very vivid dream about whatever happened last night, so that he can tell me in detail about it. Understood?"

Puck's face fell flat for a few seconds, before breaking into a wide grin. His human was quite clever, wasn't he? Puck decided, out of fondness, he wasn't going to exploit any of the thousand loopholes that request left. "Yes Sir, Mr Boss Man, Sir!"

In a swirl of green, the espresso machine disappeared, the computer and papers went back to where they belonged, and fully-Puck floated into the air. His eyes dropped in sleepiness, but twinkled happily.

"Didn't I say to finish that up first?" David asked with a playful smile.

"Eh, it's finished enough for tonight." Puck dismissed, stretching in midair before floating over to his nest of quilts and pillows.

"Want me to tuck you in?" David chuckled, watching Puck try and fail to do his earlier trick with the blanket.

Puck regarded him carefully for a moment. He'd never been 'tucked in' before, but he trusted David (a revelation that came with a dulled sense of surprise), so why not? "Sure."

"Alright, lay down." David walked over and took the blanket. Puck obediently laid down, twisting and turning a bit before he was comfortable. As the human started to wrap the blanket around him, years of other instances of being bound caught up to Puck, making him panic. But he quickly calmed down, his body realizing that it wasn't cold iron, but warm cloth that currently held him. "There we go. All good?"

"Yeah. Thanks, Bossy." Puck said quietly, hoping his gratefulness properly carried over in his tone. Not just for the blanket.

"Goodnight, Owen." David walked over to the door, shutting off the light as he left. "Goodnight, Puck."

"Goodnight, Mr Xanatos." Two voices spoke, and yawned, in unison.

Chapter 4: Day

Xanatos is referred to as Xanatos in the end (rather than David) because I feel that's what Owen would think of him as.

After David had left the room, a strange idea popped into his head, inspired by his dear assistant's clashing personalities. A certain impression had burned itself into his brain, and he was not going to be able to rest until he dealt with it.

He went out, rescheduling work he needed to put off until Owen was awake anyways, and searched for what he needed. He found two separate items with parts of what he wanted, so he bought them both and took them home to fix them.

Puck stretched, yawning. He felt a lot better after after his nap. He mentally checked the time; 17:30, he didn't have to go to work quite yet, he could rest just a little bit longer... His eyes flickered open when his arm brushed against something. He sat up, looking at this new addition to his space.

It was a doll, a toy, a stuffed animal. It was the single most colorful parrot Puck had ever seen, and he instantly adored it, but it was dressed in a little grey business suit. It was even clutching a tiny briefcase in its wing.

It seems Mr Xanatos has left us a gift. Owen remarked thoughtfully.

"But why? What does he want for it?" Puck asked, ironically trusting his creation to know more than he did about human nature. "His birthday's soon, maybe he wants two presents."

I doubt he wants anything in return. Owen replied. *Based on the nature of the gift, it seems Mr Xanatos was just inspired by our unique confrontation.*

"Why give it to us, then?" Puck asked, still confused. "In exchange for us inspiring him?"

Maybe it was just to be nice. I dare say he's rather fond of us. Owen suggested, though he didn't sound entirely sure.

"I guess I'm a bit fond of him as well." Puck smiled, holding up the parrot. He frowned, thinking. "Owen, the Gathering isn't all that far off."

I know.

"I don't want to go." Puck whispered. He hugged his new doll, face hardening after a few moments. "Owen, we aren't going."

I don't think Oberon will give you much of a choice. Owen drawled, the faintest current of surprise running under his tone.

"Too bad for him." Puck replied, a wicked grin spreading across his face as the gears began to turn in his tricky head. "Owen, have I ever told you about the Phoenix Gate?"

Owen Burnett walked into Xanatos' office at precisely 19:00.

"Good evening, Owen. Did you sleep well?" Xanatos asked from behind his desk.

"Yes, Sir." Owen nodded. "I got your gift. Thank you. May I ask the occasion?"

"No occasion." Xanatos shrugged, grinning. "So, did you have any interesting dreams last night?"

Owen's mouth briefly flicked upwards in a smirk. "As a matter of fact, Sir, I did..."

— end of "After The Mirror" —