



Goodnight, Arkham

Batman - All Media Types · Not Rated · 1223 words

by Arukir

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Fandom: Batman - All Media Types Rating: Not Rated Category: Multi

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Relationships: Pamela Isley/Harleen Quinzel (implied), Joker (DCU) & Harleen Quinzel

Characters: Pamela Isley, Harleen Quinzel, Jonathan Crane, Jervis Tetch, Joker (DCU), Edward Nygma, Harvey Dent, Original Demon Character(s)

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While Jonathan ponders his new cellmate, Joker performs a nightly ritual.

Jervis is relatively new to Arkham at this point, having been there maybe a week or two.

Corvin is my Demon OC that's bonded to Jonathan. If requested, I'll add Fanart of him.

The exchange between Jervis and Jonathan near the beginning is heavily based on one between my youngest sister (let's call her Venus) and I.

Hope you enjoyed reading as much as I enjoyed writing! ☺

Oh, Jervis's goodnight was made with help from ChatGPT. I was using it to help me find quotes, but it gave me things based on quotes instead, which I put together into that line.

"Hickory dickory dock, the mouse ran up the clock." Jervis sang, cheerily kicking his legs from the top bunk of their cell. "The clock struck nine, the mouse..." He trailed off expectantly.

Jonathan gave a put-up on sigh from the bottom bunk, flipping another page of his book before flatly adding "Sat down to dine. Hickory dickory dock."

"Ooh, good one!" Jervis clapped, watching a guard pass their cell on patrol. "Hickory dickory dock, the mouse ran up the clock. The clock struck ten—"

"Can this now end?" Jonathan asked.

"Nope!" Jervis shook his head, popping the 'p'. "Hickory dickory dock. Hickory dickory dock, the mouse ran up the clock, the clock struck eleven, the mouse..."

"Had the same problem as at seven." Jonathan grumbled. "Hickory dickory dock." Before Jervis could finish, he added "Hickory dickory dock, the mouse ran up the clock. The clock struck twelve..."

"Into the ending we dwelve!" Jervis chuckled. "Hick-ory~"

"Dickory."

"Dooooock!" They finished right as the guard made his second pass, shouting at them to shut up and get ready for lights out.

Jonathan put down his book as darkness overcame the cells, listening to the guard's footsteps fade away. Corvin curled up on his chest once the nightly check was over, both of them craving physical closeness in the face of the mental distance the Rune Collars provided. He patted the demon with a gentleness few would believe him capable of as he mentally counted down from when the guard could no longer be heard.

As soon as a full minute had passed, a certain clown's nightly ritual began.

"Goodnight, Eddie-boy!" Joker yelled, managing to be obnoxiously loud while still quiet enough to not be heard by the guards.

"Goodnight, Joker." Edward called out, having learned a while back that ignoring him only made things worse. Or he was actually becoming fond of Gotham's prince of crime, despite his insistence to the contrary. Jonathan would bet money the answer was somewhere between those two options.

"Goodnight, Twoface!" Joker said next, apparently going cell by cell tonight. Last time, he'd gone alphabetically by last name. Time before that was length of criminal career. He'd somehow gone by medical record once, which Jonathan was still worried about.

"Goodni- **shut up and let us sleep** -Joker." Harvey had always been somewhat willing to indulge others, but the two went to bed early, so Harv had grown fed up with being woken up pretty quickly. Their disagreements on how to deal with Joker were a nightly source of entertainment for the chronically-bored inmates.

"Goodnight, Pumpkin!" Joker continued, unfazed as ever by Harv's anger.

"Goodnight', Mistah J!" Harley giggled, the only one not annoyed by this nightly show.

"Goodnight, Pa—"

"Joker." Isley growled, a warning tone heavily lacing her voice.

"Goodnight, Ivy." Joker corrected himself in a mumble. It was amazing how quickly she was able to cow him since dear Harley had grown so, er, fond of her.

There was silence in lieu of a response, and Jonathan could hear a muffled sound of annoyance from Joker's cell. Before the clown could move on, however, Harley's scolding whisper could be heard.

"Pammy!"

"Oh, fine." Isley grumbled. "Goodnight, Joker."

It was amazing how much she indulged him since Harley had grown so fond of her.

Joker made a happy coo-sound, cut off quickly but still audible, before he called out "Goodnight, Hatguy!"

"Oh, uh, g-goodnight." Jervis stuttered nervously. He still wasn't used to conversing regularly with one of the most infamous men in Gotham. He seemed to draw courage as he hesitantly added "'Life, what is it but a dream?' Dream well, everyone; may you awake where jam is always today."

"Goodnight, Jervis." A few members of their cellblock chorused. It appeared that Jonathan wasn't the only one who was fond of the new addition to their lineup. He wasn't sure how to feel about that.

"Goodnight, Jonny! Goodnight, Spooky!" Joker finished up his bizarre roll call.

Jonathan, despite knowing the same lesson Edward had learned, usually opted for attempting to ignore him. Corvin nipped at his crooked nose, sending him a disapproving glare, and Jonathan rolled his eyes; even unable to properly communicate, his dear demon managed to get across his desire.

"Goodnight." He said simply, turning to face the wall in a silent 'stop disturbing me'. Corvin stretched next to him, purring in approval. Johnathan held him, trying not to miss his mental voice.

Having no cellmate of his own — Arkham staff could learn lessons as well, it seemed — Joker finished up with a cackle before plopping down on his bed hard enough to make the old springs creak.

A few more quiet goodnights and shut ups were exchanged by the others before things finally settled down for the night. Jonathan got as comfortable as possible on his stiff cot, hoping to wrestle a few hours of sleep from his insomnia before he started 'art therapy' tomorrow.

What utter nonsense were these buffoons going to come up with next?

A half-hour later, Jonathan decided that something was missing. Some sound. Whispered arguing and soft snores could be heard from all the regular places, Joker's whistle-giggle marking his less-than-peaceful sleep, but Jonathan was still sure that something was wrong.

Finally, he realized what it was; Jervis's breathing had not yet fallen into the deep rhythms of rest. He was the opposite of Jonathan, always asleep within minutes and only waking once morning came, usual with perfectly pleasant dreams. Had he already become so used to the man that such a small thing as staying up a bit late was cause for concern?

Apparently, yes. "Tetch? Are you alright?" Jonathan whispered, hoping no one heard him but not too worried if they did; there was a silent understanding between Rogues that their heartless reputations would never last long within Arkham's forced cohabitation.

Jervis was quiet for minute, before whispering back "If I told you 'goodnight' and wished for you to say it back, would you be as annoyed at me as you are the Knave?"

"Quite possibly, yes." Jonathan answered flatly, unbelieving that the Hatter had been kept up by such a ridiculous thing. Then again, considering who it was...

"Oh." Jervis sounded disappointed. Maybe he really had been serious. "Alright, then."

Jonathan was fully prepared to go back to trying to sleep and forget all about the other's peculiar behavior. Corvin had other ideas. The demon pecked at him, squawking quietly, until the ex-professor finally relented.

"Okay, okay, I get the point!" Jonathan whispered harshly, pushing Corvin away. He sighed before raising his voice slightly. "Goodnight, Tetch."

"Goodnight, March Hare!" Jervis said happily, yawning even as he did. Apparently satisfied, he quickly fell into a deep and peaceful rest.

March Hare? Jonathan thought about that as he settled back down with Corvin to attempt sleep. That character was connected to the Hatter, wasn't he? Something about coming and going?

His last thought before drifting off was about whether or not it would send the wrong message if he actually read that damn book.

— end of "Goodnight, Arkham" —