



Happy Birthday, Eddie!

Batman - All Media Types · Not Rated · 587 words

by Arukir

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Characters: Edward Nygma, Joker (DCU), Harleen Quinzel (Mentioned), Joan Leland (mentioned)

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Once again, Edward's birthday has rolled around. This year, he just wants a quiet, calm day. He's not even going to break out of Arkham this year!

Oh, warning: Mentions of drugging (Joker knocks a bunch of people out, but they're fine), and one f-bomb at the end.

So it's my birthday too! Or it will be tomorrow, anyways. Happy April Fools', everybody! 😊

Edward decided to have a quiet birthday this year; his life as The Riddler was so chaotic, which was normally great, but he thought he deserved some peace and quiet. He wasn't even going to break out of Arkham.

It was indeed a quiet birthday. A few presents managed to be cleared by security, and they let him watch the ones that didn't be destroyed — it was a lot of fun watching the various weapons and unstable chemicals his cohorts thought made acceptable presents blow up.

Doc Leland even gave him official permission to graffiti his cell walls as 'art therapy'! That was merely the cherry on top of what had been a surprisingly delightful day. Just the break he needed.

Which of course meant it couldn't last. Just before midnight, Riddler heard a series of soft thuds. Peeking outside his cell, he discovered every prisoner and guard on his block had been put to sleep, suspiciously green gas floating around them. His wondering to why he hadn't been affected was solved as he spotted a purple gas running into his own cell; the antidote.

Green and purple and not from Edward. Oh no.

"Heya, Eddie boy!" A familiar and obnoxious voice chuckled, somewhat more quietly than normal. Joker swayed down the hallway, holding something behind his back. Oh double no. "Happy birt'day!"

Harley wasn't with him. Whatever he was doing, either she didn't approve or he thought she wouldn't approve. Well, Edward supposed she could just be busy, but the former two theories were both more likely and more concerning.

"I don't want to escape this year, Jokes." Edward said sternly. "I'm having some me time."

"Good t'ing I'm not here ta break ya out, den!" Joker giggled. In a swift movement, he moved his hands from behind his back, shoving them between the bars of Edward's cell. He held out a green gift box with a purple bow, an expectant and excited look on his face. "I jus' wanted to give ya yer present!"

Edward almost snarked that he could've just mailed it, but, well... Anything from Joker was marked destroy-on-sight by Arkham security, unless it was for Harley. Edward sighed, accepting the gift with more than a little uncertainty. Whatever it was, refusing it would end up far more regrettable than opening it; Joker would make sure of it.

Edward lifted the lid slowly, head tilted way in fear of yet another glitter bomb (Joker was every bit as fond of them as he was *actual* bombs) or perhaps a rubber snake. Or a live one. Or Joker Gas. Or...

Nothing? He hadn't expected *nothing* to pop out. Curiosity getting the better of his caution, as it usually did, Edward reached into the box. All he found was a single photo, depicting him and Joker together. He was smirking, Joker's arm thrown over his shoulders and mouth stretched in a grin, the clown's free hand gesturing in delight; the aftermath of their first successful heist together, Edward remembered after a moment of study.

The words 'Happy Birthday/April Fools!' were scrawled in sharp, uneven script on the back. Edward lifted his head, intending to ask how precisely this counted as an April Fools' joke, but the other was mysteriously absent.

Edward blinked, nose twitching as a sour smell hit the air. He looked down, seeing that the green and purple smoke had turned... Pink?

Oh *fuck* no.

Happy Birthday, Eddie!

— end of "Happy Birthday, Eddie!" —