



Imp Tales

Superman - All Media Types · Batman - All Media Types · Not Rated · 3001 words

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For some unfathomable reason, the Fifth Dimensional Imps don't get much focus in fanfics. I will be correcting that.

(For those familiar with my past work featuring Imps, I don't ship Mxy/Bat-Mite anymore, so sorry if you're interested in that)

Chapter 1: Do Ya Ever Wish I Was Someimp Else?

During a quiet moment in the middle of a truce, Mxyzptlk asks a question that's been bugging him for a very long time.

Clark, boyscout that he is, ends up bonding with the magical menace.

"Do ya... Do ya ever wish ya had a normal Imp, instead a me?" Mr. Mxyzptlk had asked during a quiet moment in the middle of one of their rare truces.

"I wasn't aware there was such a thing," Clark had responded. At Mxyzptlk's look, he clarified, "A normal Imp, I mean. Aren't you guys all a little... Well..." He made a vague gesture near his head, not quite sure how to say utterly loony without sounding rude.

Mxyzptlk chuckled under his breath. The fact that he didn't snap something rude back was a tribute to how stressful the past few days must've been for him too, not just for Clark.

"Ya got a point there, Supes." The Imp shrugged, sighing. "I meant, ya know, a fan. Someimp obsessed wit' ya."

"Last I checked, you were yelling at Bat-Mite about how much better than Batman I am," Clark reminded him, laughing good-naturedly. Despite, well, everything, he was kind of fond of the pint-sized orange-and-purple menace that was his Imp.

"That's 'cause ya are better'n him! I mean, ya got laser eyes an' freeze breath an'—" Mxyzptlk cut himself off, shaking his head harshly. "Dammit," he growled. "I refuse to be like them, I refuse to be."

"Refuse to be like who?" Clark asked warily, growing worried.

"All those Impeople basing everything they are off some mortal or other," Mxyzptlk answered. He looked at Clark with something broken in his eyes. "I was like that once, ya know. 'Course I was, I'm an Imp, I'm supposed to be like that." He huffed out a humorless laugh. "I pretty much lived in these, these pajamas, see. Superman pajamas. They had a hood with a really long point, so's it looked like a cape when it was down. An' some bells 'round th' collar an' stuff, but that was jus' for my job."

"You have a job?" Clark asked, deciding to ignore the 'I have pajamas based on you and used to wear them all the time' thing. That was... He wasn't even sure what that was, actually.

"Y-yeah. I'm, uh, somethin' like a fool?" Mxyzptlk explained. He rubbed at his neck, looking unusually awkward. "I work in King Brpxz's court."

"Well that's interesting." Clark shook his head gently. "I'm sorry, I guess I don't normally think about you having an actual life. Much less one working for a king."

"I don't just work for him," Mxyzptlk told him, grinning. He sounded proud as he added, "I'm married to his daughter."

"You've got a wife?" Clark laughed. Mxyzptlk nodded excitedly. "Wow, and a princess too. Good for you."

"You really mean that?"

"Yeah — nothing's better than love, right?" At least, that's what Ma and Pa had always taught Clark. Which brought up an interesting thought. "Say, you've got any kids?"

"A... few." Mxyzptlk shrugged. He groaned. "One of 'em's noticed Superboy don't have an Imp yet, so I've been dealin' wit' that mess lately. I swear, if he starts mimicking laser vision..."

"Well, kids, right?" Clark offered sympathetically. "We can't always control who they look up to, only give them the tools to hopefully choose right for themselves."

"Oh gods, I forget what a boy scout ya are sometimes," Mxyzptlk snarked, rolling his eyes. "Some days I wonder why I like ya at all."

"Some days I wonder if you do like me at all," Clark replied, only half-joking, thinking of all the evil plots and insults and such over the years.

Mxyzptlk's pointed ears drooped down, eyes going wide and watery. "That's not... Ya don't really.... Supes, I'm your Imp! Course I likes ya. I know I don't go 'round dressed up like ya no more, an' maybe I'm not always th' nicest t' ya, but I'm still yours. I can't not like ya!"

"Is that true?" Clark frowned. "I thought Imps chose who they... *take after*. I didn't realize it was some sort of compulsion."

"Bat-Mite an' I are different. We're tied to ya an' Bats, every version of ya, an' we don't really get a choice in it." Mxyzptlk didn't look the slightest bit upset by this. "It's jus' a fact of life though, ya know? I'm yours, I've never been mad about that."

"Then why don't you act like the others?" Clark asked. "If you don't hate me, then why don't you dress up like others of your kind do?"

"Would ya prefer I did?" Mxyzptlk asked carefully, going very very still. They both knew that Clark saying 'yes' would change nothing. Mxyzptlk did what he wanted and always would. But that didn't make the moment any less tense, or the answer any less important.

"No," Clark answered immediately. "I'd like it if you'd stop being my villain, sure, but besides that I don't care. It's not my place to choose who you are, and certainly not my place to make you act like me. Not like you would anyways."

"That's not what I asked, Superdolt," Mxyzptlk hissed. "Ignore what your place is an' ignore th' fact that ya can't control me, an' answer my damn question — would ya prefer it if ya had a more normal Imp? One that dressed up all proper an' called himself, ugh, *Super-Mite* an' all that nonsense?"

Clark thought about it for a second. He looked Mxyzptlk in the eye and slowly shook his head once. "Between Super-Mite and Mr. Mxyzptlk... I'd choose Mr. Mxyzptlk every time. Though, seriously, I'd really love if you'd stop being a villain."

"I can't stop, ya needs someone to test ya an' remind ya to stay sharp an' stuff. Super-brainless," Mxyzptlk muttered, but he was ducking his head away to try to hide his smile as he did.

Quiet passed for a moment.

"I miss it, sometimes," Mxyzptlk said quietly, sounding strangely vulnerable, not looking at Clark. "I'm not like you mortals, it's not fanaticism like those stupid humans tha' sometimes pester ya. It's jus'... instinct. An' part of me wants to give in an' be like all the others. But if I'm Super-Mite, then what happens to Mr. Mxyzptlk? He's gone, an' I... I like him too much for that."

"Well, if it makes you feel better," Clark told him, "I like him too."

A second later, Clark had a very small but surprisingly strong orange-and-purple figure wrapped around his side. "Stop it, Supes, or I'm gonna start cryin'."

"Getting soft on me, Mxy?" Clark asked, patting the Imp's back fondly.

"Heh, ya wish, ya ol' lug," Mxyzptlk answered, pulling back to wipe his suspiciously wet eyes.

An alarm began to blare.

"Well, time to get back to it, I guess." Clark sighed, stretching.

"They'll never know what hit 'em," Mxyzptlk said, grinning. He rubbed his hands together, power sparking between him. The moment of vulnerability was over, and he was once again the dangerous man from the Fifth Dimension that Clark knew him as.

The Kryptonian suppressed a shudder. He was definitely fond of the little guy, but if this was what it was like to be his hero...

...he'd hate to know what it was like to truly be his *enemy*.

Chapter 2: Unfinished

Some unfinished Imp-based fics I wanted to share, since I'm unsure when I will finish them and wish to get them out there.

Bat-Mite is called Btsyzbr. This is a play on Batsy/Btsy and Zabour, which was the name of his species in an early comic. I thought of naming him Ergo after his supposed homeworld in one comic, but I don't think it really quite fits...

For this, we're assuming most Imps aren't allowed to mess around in the mortal world without special permission, which isn't easy to get. Mxy and Bat-Mite are exceptions because they have special ties to Superman and Batman respectively, and *have* to be allowed there to 'guide' them in their own unique ways.

Other names, though not all appear:

- Quinn-Mite — Trpkrstl (Triple Crystal), sometimes called Trip or Trippy
- Scare-Mite — Brrlp (Burlap)
- Hat-Mite — Llwsrll (Lewis Carroll), sometimes called Llws
- Riddle-Mite — Prplxd 'Perp' (Perplexed)
- Hood-Mite — Lyzyrys (Lazarus)
- Joke-Mite — Jnxrll 'Jinxie'
- Poison Mitey — ??? 'Pozy/Posey' (possibly Pzyblm aka Posey Bloom, but I'm not sure yet)

1: How Much Trouble Could One Little Autograph Be?

Just because Btsyzbr was obsessed with Batman didn't mean he had to act exactly like him. In fact, he mostly acted absolutely *nothing* like his hero. With some things, though...

"Heya! Bitsy! Over 'ere!"

...he could see where Bruce was coming from.

Bitsy sped up with a groan, wondering if he could pretend he didn't hear *him* and get to another dimension before—

"Where ya goin', ol' pal?" blasted Jnxrll asked, his gloved hand closing around Bitsy's wrist just as he was about to reach the universal barrier.

Slumping in defeat, Bitsy turned towards Jnxrll and sighed. "Waddya want this time, Joke-Mite?" he asked without answering the other's question.

Jnxrll pouted. "I jus' wanna talk to ya."

"Uh-huh."

Jnxrll lasted about one second of Bitsy's flat look before breaking down and admitting, "Oh, all right, fine! This is still about the Earth thing. I don't get why ya can't jus' take me for fifteen minutes to get one liddle autograph!"

"You know the rules, Jokes," Bitsy told him for what felt like the billionth time. "Imps can't jus' go traipsing about in lesser realms willy-nilly."

"Ya get to see your hero all the time," Jnxrll argued, eyes wide and pleading. "I jus' wanna see mine once. Do a pal a favor, huh? One time—"

"No can do, Jokes," Bitsy said firmly, ripping his arm out of the other's grasp. He put his hands on his hips. "Stop askin' me already! If ya wanna see him, get the council to turn ya mortal for a while or something."

"I tried," Jnxrll muttered mournfully. "They said I'm a 'chaos risk'. Me, a risk! Can ya imagine?"

"Gee, I wonder where they got that idea," Bitsy drawled, rolling his eyes. He'd known Jnxrll most his life, and the guy was admittedly a harmless goofball most the time, but... Well...

He was the 5th Dimensional Joker. Risk didn't begin to cover it.

"But I asked, an' they said ya could take me!" Jnxrll continued, reaching out for him again.

Bitsy dodged before he could grab on, his back hitting the universal wall. "Yeah, like I'd agree to be responsible for *your* actions. Get real, Jokes!"

"Fifteen minutes to talk, one autograph, an' then I'm outta there!" Jnxrll promised. "Look, I've even been practicing sayin' my name backwards to make sure I'm banished right — llrxnJ, llrxnJ, llrxnJ. I'm gone the *moment* ya say I'm too much trouble, I swear!"

Bitsy considered it for a moment. Most Imps were content to just watch their mortal, but he of all impeople understood the urge to actually *meet* the person one's **dedicated their existence to**.

But mortals were fragile, and there was only so much Bitsy could undo when it came to Imp magic. It wasn't like he thought Jnxrll would hurt anyone on purpose, exactly. It was just that he himself had spent most of his life around mortals and still barely understood how to behave around them. To add in an Imp that wasn't used to them, especially one like Joke-Mite...

"Look, Jnxrll, it's not that I don't trust you," Bitsy assured him, despite that not exactly being true. But he was trying to let him down easy. "I just... don't trust your impulse control. I'm sorry, pal. Maybe the council will let you go in a few centuries."

"Yeah," Jnxrll agreed dully. "Maybe."

"Bye?" Bitsy waved hesitantly, before booking it out of the Fifth Dimension. Interacting with Jnxrll always left him feeling a bit weird.

...

"Heysa, Jinxie!" Quinn-Mite called brightly, looking up from where she'd been watching Crow-Mite and Hat-Mite play chess in the Impham Asylum wreckroom. She winced when she saw his face. "I was gonna ask how it went, but I think I know already. Sorry, Jinx. Too bad."

"I don't get why he can't take me jus' once," Jnxrll lamented, plopping himself down on the couch next to Riddle-Mite. "I've been askin' him for centuries, an' it's always th' same thing. 'Ask the council', pfft. They've got it out for us villain-mites."

"Preach!" Hat-Mite yelled, raising his hand in solidarity before returning his attention back to his game.

"Shush, Llws," Riddle-Mite snapped. He pointed to the TV. "I'm trying to watch The Riddler's latest victory over Batmoron."

"Don't let Bitsy hear ya call him that, Perp," Jnxrll warned him, laughing. "He'll trounce ya!"

(The fic eventually has Jinxie try something dangerous to go into the mortal world, and accidentally turning himself, Bat-Mite, and Mxy — and perhaps a handful of others — temporarily human. Mxy is annoyed but not overly concerned — pulling from a canon scene where he temporarily gave his powers away and didn't seem to really care about his newly limited form —, while Jinxie is excited and committed to meeting his 'hero'. They have to get help from the Bats, which Bat-Mite is admittedly very happy about, and lay low until their powers come back... So of course a bunch of chaos happens, growth also happens, and Jinxie gets his highly-coveted autograph.)

...

Alfred opened the door to see an elderly gentleman in a plain suit, accompanied by two teenaged boys. The first boy had messy black hair squished haphazardly under a blue two-pronged Winter's hat (despite the fact it was the middle of Summer), a grey shirt with a vaguely-familiar scribble on the front, and bright pumpkin-orange eyes. The second was wearing a purple hoodie with the hood drawn too far up to clearly see his features, though a tuft of toxic green hair manage to be visible.

"Good evening, gentlemen," Alfred greeted them, as polite as ever. "May I enquire as to your business at Wayne Manor?"

"Good evening Mr. Alfred, Sir," the black-haired boy piped up, his high-pitched voice instantly recognizable to Alfred. To any of the Bats, actually.

Now he remembered where he knew that scribble from, at least. "Bat-Mite."

"Th' one an' only!" the boy giggled.

2: Playdate

"This is fraud," Mxyzptlk grumbled, floating behind Bat-Mite through the 5th Dimension.

"Oh for DC's sake." Bat-Mite put his head in his hands. "This ain't fraud, Mxy, it's jus' a playdate."

"A playdate I did not consent to," Mxyzptlk argued. "I have been misled an' my valuable time has been wasted!"

"Valuable time– what 'value' could your time possibly have??" Bat-Mite asked, looking up at him with a look of utmost confusion. "'Sides our fake ultra mega death battles between Batman an' Superman, do ya even do anythin'?"

"I– you– I have a job, fuck you very much," Mxyzptlk growled at him. At Bat-Mite's blank look, he groaned and added, "I'm literally th' royal fool, remember, nitwit?"

"You're married to King Brpxz's daughter, aren't ya?" Bat-Mite asked after a second of thought. "Ain't that nepotism or somethin'?"

"It is not–"

"Heya, Bitsy! Over here!" someone interrupted them, cackling. A group of Gotham-Mites were milling about outside the Just-Us League HQ. One of them, who Mxyzptlk vaguely recognized by the green hair, floated over. "Aren't ya a bit late for th' meeting?"

"Heeey, Joke-Mite." Joke-Mite was the only being in the multiverse that Mxyzptlk knew of that could make Bat-Mite lose literally all sense of cheerfulness in 0.5 seconds flat. "Yeah, I sorta forgot it was today. Had to, um, deal wit' some other plans afore I could come."

"Ah, well, I hope ya have fun in there, buddy..." Joke-Mite trailed off, wringing his hands together.

"...waddya want, Jokes?" Bat-Mite asked, sounding even more annoyed than he did that time Mr. Mxyzptlk graffitied his model Batmobile collection.

"Who says I want anythin'?" Joke-Mite asked innocently. He wilted under Bat-Mite's flat look. "Ya see, Scare-Mite an' I- where is he? Brrlp, get over here- it's just Bitsy, stop worryin', ya big crybaby!"

Joke-Mite stretched out his arms and wrangled the burlap-headed Imp into standing next to him. They all politely ignored just how badly Scare-Mite was shaking.

"Anyways, we noticed that Joker an' Scarecrow don't team up one-on-one all that often," Joke-Mite continued, one gloved hand clenched tight around Scare-Mite's arm. "An' we was wonderin' if, maybe, th' next time you're in th' mortal realm, ya could... set somethin' up for us?"

"I-it be r-r-really c-cool," Scare-Mite added, ducking a bit behind Joke-Mite as he spoke. "B-but we under-understand if ya don't wanna, 'f c-course..."

"I'll think about it," Bat-Mite told them, sighing. "No promises, though, guys. Batman doesn't really like when I... Though there is that one version of him that really does need t' be brought down a bit afore he gets himself killed... Eh, I'll see what I can do."

"Thanks, Bitsy!"

"That reminds me, it's Bat-Mite."

"Have fun in your meeting, Bitsy!"

"BAT. MITE."

Ignoring him, Joke-Mite waved goodbye and dragged Scare-Mite back towards the group of Gotham-Mites. Shaking his head, Bat-Mite started floating into the Hall of Just-Us.

"Ya had t' deal wit' other plans wit' me," Mxyzptlk said sulkily once they were in the Hall and out of anyimp's earshot, crossing his arms to make clear his annoyance.

"I said I was sorry!" Bat-Mite whined. "Listen, jus' sit an' work on your dumb court act for a bit—"

"So you do remember! Hey, waddya mean 'dumb'?!"

"—an' then we can go do our thing right after I'm done wit' my friends," Bat-Mite promised. When Mxyzptlk just continued brooding, he added, "I'll even help ya with one of your plots against Superman~"

That had Mxy perking up. "Really?"

"So long as word nevah, evah gets back t' Batman about it, sure!"

(Mxy sits and writes down jokes/gags and tries to ignore the other Imps. Bat-Mite tricks Mxyzptlk into playing with the Just-Us League by saying things like 'no-one is faster than Flash' and 'who does lasers better than Cyborg, amirite?'. But it goes sideways when Mxyzptlk realizes what happened and gets into an argument with Wonder-Mite, resulting in Mxy trying to destroy the Just-Us League building and Wonder-Mite calling him a freak.)

("You're just a bunch of delusional fans playacting real heroes and thinking you're something special. Mock me all you want, but at least my hero knows I exist!")

"Well at least our heroes don't hate us like Superman does you!")

("Super-Mite—"

"DON'T CALL ME THAT!")

— end of "Imp Tales" —