Trick or Treat

by keeptogethernow

Summary

Jason is too old for trick or treating. His brothers, not so much.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

“I’m sure you’re wondering why I called you here,” Jason says, because he’s wondering the same thing.

Across from him, Tim and Damian both roll their eyes. He’d needed a little backup for his current project, and he’d thought that maybe getting the only two people he could think of who were just as willing to go behind Bruce’s back as he was would be the best way to get what he needed. But… apparently, he hadn’t remembered the fact that these two were also some of the least helpful people he knows.

Damian snorts. “Tt. So…you need our help to…go ‘trick-or-treating’?”

“Um…yes?”

“You do know that I’m, like, seventeen, right?” Tim smirks a little and goes back to looking at his phone. “’S a little old for trick-or-treating. And he doesn’t know what that is, so…”

“I do so!”
“Sure.”

Jason sighs and snaps, “Hey! You two, zip it!”

Surprisingly, they stop. But…then they both turn to glare at him, which is terrifying. Jason is already really regretting this decision.

“Okay, look. Trick-or-treating is where you wear a costume and get candy from people. And,” he glares back at Tim. “You look like you’re twelve most of the time, so shut up. Look. Guys. I know you don’t want to do anything for me, but I can’t go, I’m too old, and I need someone who can.”

Tim snorts and doesn’t look up. Damian glares and crosses his arms. But neither one actually says anything or leaves, so he’s pretty sure that he’s won.

“Thank you. So, I’m thinking you guys can just basically wear your own uniforms, maybe make them look a little less… real. And then, you just gotta walk through this neighborhood, ring the doorbells and get candy until you get to the right house. Bonus, you can beat the shit out of these guys if they do turn out to be kidnappers. Okay?”

After a second, Damian grins a little evilly. “Fine. But we keep the candy.” Tim shrugs in agreement.

“Deal!”

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It turns out that remaking two state-of-the-art uniforms to look like children’s costumes is a bit above his level. But Tim apparently has a talent for destroying clothes, and he’s more than willing to apply this knowledge for the greater good. Damian spends most of this time alternating between shooting disparaging comments at Tim, who ignores him, and cheerfully helping with the more aggressive parts of the process. Finally, they’re finished, about an hour before it starts to get dark—the perfect time for trick-or-treating. Of course, as soon as Jason says so out loud, both kids stare at him like he’s grown a second head.


Tim purses his lips and looks down at the domino mask he’s been fiddling with, while Damian just sneers and makes some sort of derisive statement about Jason’s upbringing in general. It takes Jason less than five seconds to realize what the big deal is.

“Oh.” He pauses to think of the right words. Finally, he decides to address his question at Tim, who’s less likely to literally decapitate him. “You’ve never gone trick-or-treating, huh?”

“Nope,” Tim says, popping the last syllable. “Parents were busy, boarding school wasn’t near any neighborhoods, and B always needed the backup on Halloween.”

Jason nods, because, yeah, that makes sense. And of course Damian wouldn’t have gone either—the League of Assassins wasn’t going to care about that shit and the future leader had more important things to do than being a child. He considers apologizing, but realizes that this would probably make it worse. So instead he claps his hands together and says “Let’s get going!”

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Because Jason had never actually mentioned the address, neither boy called him out when he’d parked several blocks away from the middle class development where the suspected human trafficking ring operated. Tim had held back for a moment to smirk at him, but hadn’t commented on
the action. Jason isn’t sure still if that was because he’d appreciated the chance to actually get candy or because he’d wanted to avoid Damian finding a reason to fight. Regardless, they have to walk the streets, knocking on each door for candy as they go.

When they’re about to turn the corner to the correct street, Jason catches up briefly to give directions.

“Okay, so there’s like three guys in that house up there with the green trim on it. Apparently, they turn their garage into a ‘haunted house’ every year. Anyways, I’ll be hanging back, because why the fuck should I care what you two do? That should do the trick—they’re looking for kids out alone or with parents who aren’t paying attention. So just…look vulnerable or something.”

Jason plays the part of older sibling, reluctantly walking behind the other two, sighing and scowling appropriately, staring at his phone instead of watching his brothers. It’s a good cover, and both boys are apparently very good at acting like they’re both younger than they are and that they like each other (although Jason’s pretty sure that they really don’t hate each other, even if they’d never admit it). They merge into a group of costumed kids and Jason joins the smaller group of parents and older siblings trailing behind.

Years of training have allowed Jason to maintain vigilance without looking like it. He watches as the group trails up to the house, kids squealing with joy and fear as they line up to enter the haunted house. It’s a fairly good set-up, with decent decorations and appropriate lighting that reassure parents of it’s credibility. The sound of laughs and screams from inside coupled with the music playing over a speaker serve a dual purpose: creating the right ambience and covering up any real screams inside.

Even though he’d come up with this plan, Jason’s suddenly very nervous about letting either kid go in, but he realizes as he looks at the group of children that he can’t actually tell which ones are his brothers. He’d never really noticed ‘til now that kids all look the same, and this really doesn’t help his concern.

Of course, there’s nothing he can do except for wait and follow the plan. When the same group is out, he dutifully follows them, staring at the phone. A quick glance tells him that neither boy is in the group now, and he smiles slightly. As soon as he turns the corner, he breaks off and heads back to the car, where he’s supposed to meet the two.

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They’re waiting on the hood when Jason comes into view. Damian has his mask off and is rifling through his pillowcase of loot, while Tim cheerfully munches on a candy bar, legs swinging idly. Rolling his eyes, the young man waves casually as he walks up, grinning a bit.

“So, how’d it go?”

Tim gives him a chocolatey grin. “Pretty good. You were right about the place—totally had a friggin’ kidnapping ring going on in the basement. Anyway, we kicked some ass and called the cops. Easy.”

“Oh-huh,” Jason says, eyeing the amount of candy. “Where’d all this come from? Neither of you had a full bag when you went in.”

“Spoils of war,” Damian announces grandly, brandishing a Laffy Taffy. “We earned these sugar-filled treats, Todd.”

“I see.” He can’t think of an argument, so he settles for reaching over and stealing a Twix bar out of Tim’s bag (he’s not risking his hand with Damian’s stash). “Well, it is some quality candy. Happy
Halloween, brats.”

End Notes

I needed a break from writing dark stories, and I love Halloween. I may have stolen the ideas from real life. Namely, I didn't go trick or treating until I was nearly 18, but I'm small enough to get away with it if I wear a mask, and we had these neighbors who'd set up a haunted house in their garage every year.

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