Jail Time
by Tanaletheia

Summary

Jason on the other hand became more smug the longer Dick decided to stay silent. "Yeah, I always thought I would be the one to get us arrested, too." He squinted at Dick. "I'm actually kinda bummed I can't take credit for this."

- 
or: Bruce gets a call.

(Can be read without knowing Correlation and Causation & Movie Night: The Batlash)

Notes

An idea I couldn't get of my mind.
Have fun!

See the end of the work for more notes.
The day Dick had decided to become a cop Bruce started expecting the worst. He dreaded the day the police would call to tell him his son was injured – or worse. Not that he had been able to dismiss the possibility of kids being injured before. They were all firmly set on being vigilantes with or without his permission. But working a dangerous day job on top of his nightly responsibilities removed Dick from Bruce's ability to back him up when he called.

So when the call finally came early one morning Bruce stopped breathing and his heart skipped a beat. Or more. The study around him faded into nothingness. Only Bruce and the phone in his hand remained. The seconds stretched. Even though the man on the line kept talking Bruce barely heard anything after "Mr. Wayne, this is Officer Riley from the 6th precinct. It's about your son..."

Bruce felt cold all over. His breathing stuttered back into action when he became light headed enough to notice he had stopped in the first place. The line was silent. Officer Riley was waiting for a response. Bruce hadn't heard the question. He was gripping the armrest of his chair to ground himself. His voice was shaking but it carried enough to be heard over the phone. "I'm sorry, could you repeat that?"

The officer cleared his throat. "Your son and his friend are in our custody."

"What."

Bruce walked through the corridor that lead to the drunk tanks with Officer Riley. His stony face was a little more Batman than he had intended but Dick and his "friend" Jonas T. Peters were in police custody. So besides trying to find out what the hell his sons had done to end up being arrested in the first place, Bruce would also have to have a serious conversation with Jason about aliases and how flipping your names and some letters around was not an adequate alias. The boy enjoyed being legally dead too much.

They got to a room of which about half was separated from the rest with bars. The room only held two cots behind the bars and a small desk with a chair in front of them. Jason was lounging on one of the cots with his arms crossed behind his head. Dick was slumped on the other with his head buried in his hands.

"We decided it would be best to keep your son and his friend separate from the rest of our guests. I didn't think the armed robbers in the regular holding cells would be good company for one of our own," Officer Riley said glancing at Dick.

"That is probably for the best," Bruce replied. His dry tone caught the attention of his sons. Both looked up at him, Jason grinning and Dick with a pained expression.

Bruce turned towards his sons and leveled a look at them he usually reserved for Robin. "Boys."
Jason's expression could be described as gleeful if he wasn't currently in jail. Scratch that. His expression was gleeful. He was vibrating with excitement. Officer Riley looked vaguely uncomfortable. There were probably few people in Gotham that were anything resembling happy to be in jail. Be it temporary or permanent. Bruce could think of a few people that didn't care if they were arrested and they were all Rogues. Or apparently his son.

"I'll get the paperwork ready for you," the officer fled the room and heaved a relieved sigh when the door closed behind him.

Bruce was still looking at his sons. Dick was squirming. That was unusual. Bruce frowned at him but that just made the squirming worse. Curious.

Bruce tried to make eye contact with Dick but he evaded. "What happened."

It wasn't a question. It was a Robin-level-order.

Jason bounced on his cot. "I can't believe I actually get to say this; but: It's all Dick's fault."

Dick groaned and buried his face back in his hands. Bruce raised his eyebrows. That was not the kind of behaviour he had come to expect from his eldest.

Jason on the other hand became more snug the longer Dick decided to stay silent. "Yeah, I always thought I would be the one to get us arrested, too." He squinted at Dick. "I'm actually kinda bummed I can't take credit for this."

Bruce rolled his eyes. If someone didn't start with an actual explanation in the next minute he was going to go insane. "Care to elaborate on that? Because no one out there seemed to actually comprehend what happened."

Dick buried his face deeper in his hands, if that was even possible. Jason stretched, carded a hand through his hair and bounced to his feet. He came to the bars meeting Bruce's gaze head on. Leaning his weight against the bars Jason started the tale in his best narrator voice. "Well it all started three days ago-"

"Why start way back there?" Dick still didn't lift his head out of his hands.

"IT ALL STARTED THREE DAYS AGO when Dickiebird knocked on my door."

Jason was sleeping. So who the fuck was beating up his door? He could go take a look. Save his door, beat up the offending party... or just shoot their kneecaps out. That sounded like fun. Retribution for waking him up at – Jason lifted his head and cracked one eye open – 9 in the morning.

The knocking hadn't stopped yet.

He needed to get up. Like now. Or his door might break.

Jason grabbed the gun from his nightstand and stumbled towards his front door. It was still being pummelled by whoever was on the other side. He swung there door open suddenly and aimed his
gun at the person on the other side.

Dick.

Dick with a wide grin on his face.

Dick with a wide grin on his face opening his mouth to say something that – no doubt – Jason would not want to hear.

So Jason slammed the door shut. Before Dick could say what he wanted. He made his way back to his bed and let himself fall back onto it.

Just as he was about to drift off again the tapping started. A nerve grating noise that came from the window. The bedroom window.

Jason grabbed the gun again pointing it at the window without opening his eyes. "Wha' d'ya wan'?" he slurred.

"Let me in." The tapping still hadn't stopped.

"Come back when I'm awake." Jason put the gun back on the table and buried his face in the pillow.

"You'll get to shoot people."

Jason turned his head to face the window and cracked one eye open. "Who?"

Dick finally stopped tapping the glass. His wide grin didn't do anything to reassure Jason. "Let me in and I'll tell you."

Jason buried his head back in the pillows. "Can I shoot them after I've slept?"

Dick glanced around on his perch on the fire escape. He started tapping again. "Can we not talk about shooting people through your closed window? If anyone hears us I'm gonna get fired."

Jason kept his eyes shut trying to tune out the constant tapping. "Will you let me sleep after we talk?"

Dick shrugged. "Sure. If you still want to."

Jason considered this for a moment before turning his back to the window. "Come back with breakfast."

Dick opened the window and climbed in. He had been so good about boundaries until then. "I'll just make some."

Jason's eyes sprang open and he launched himself at Dick tackling him to the floor. "No! If you burn down my kitchen again I'm going to fucking shoot you!" Jason had Dick pinned to the ground.

The other man grinned up at him. "Ha! Got you out of bed."

Jason scowled at Dick. "I can still shoot you. Even without a fire in my kitchen."
"Okay, first. Don't threaten to shoot your brother. Second, how is this related to both of you ending up in jail?" Bruce went over to the desk, dragged the chair over to the bars and took a seat. This was going to take a while.

Jason waved him off. "I'm getting to that. It's a complicated story, let me tell it right."

Bruce rolled his eyes. Why were all his kids so damn dramatic?

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Jason ended up cooking them breakfast. Dick was at least able to turn on the coffee maker without breaking it, so he was sitting at the small table and nursing a cup. Jason had made him promise to keep his mouth shut until breakfast was ready. He was almost keeping the promise. Dick had tried to say something a few times by now but Jason had shushed him everytime without looking. Jason plated the food and set the plates down on the table. Dick perked up and watched his brother pour himself a cup of coffee and sit down next to him.

Jason waved his hand vaguely in Dick's direction. "So?"

Dick took a deep breath. "Little D made a comment that had me worried."

"You worry about everything," Jason said chewing his food.

Dick bristled. "No, I don't."

"Yes, you do."

Dick rolled his eyes. "Doesn't matter it was justified." He was met with raised eyebrows and a deadpan stare and a telling silence. Dick ignored it. "One of his classmates is a racist."

Jason frowned. "And you want me to shoot an eight year old?"

Dick choked on his coffee and coughed. "What? No. And Dami is eleven."

"Where's the difference?" Jason cocked his head.

Dick shook his head and took a bite of his food. "You know what? I don't want you to shoot the kid, so let's put a pin in that for now." Dick made eye contact to make sure Jason was listening. "The point is. Teachers are supposed to stop the students from bullying. But the way Dami told it-"

"Wait." Jason held up a hand. "Demon Brat told you he's being bullied?" Damian? Complaining about another kid Jason could understand but actually admitting that he was being bullied? Showing weakness like that? Talia would've had his head.

"Of course not. I'm detective enough to read between the lines." Dick rolled his eyes.

Jason drained his coffee and got up to get himself a new cup. He turned back towards Dick and leaned against the counter shrugging his shoulders. "Whatever. Get to the point."

Dick jabbed his fork in Jason's direction. "I'm trying to. You keep interrupting me. Dami basically told me that the kid was being an insufferable asshole right next to a teacher, Callahan. And the man didn't say anything even though the kid used slurs and stuff," he finished in a rush before Jason could
interrupt him again.

Jason looked at Dick for a second before saying anything. "So you want me to shoot the teacher."

"No!" Dick recoiled. "I want you to help me gather evidence against the fucker so we can get him fired anonymously."

Jason crossed his arms and decidedly didn't pout. "You said I get to shoot people. I got out of bed for that."

Dick looked a little sheepish. "You do... With NERF guns. He can't get away with just being fired. He endangered our little brother." Dick only had a vengeful streak if it somehow concerned one of his brothers. Sometimes it was useful, other times it led to Jason being kicked out of bed way to early in the morning.

"NERF? I feel cheated. I didn't get up for that," Jason really should have fought harder to get Dick off his fire escape.

Dick propped his knees up on the chair and leaned over the table. "Think about it. We can make him think he's going crazy before getting him fired."

Jason shook his head. "Demon can take care of himself. He doesn't need the Big Bad Dick to save the day."

"He can pretend he doesn't care about what people say, but it hurts him." Dick looked at Jason with his patented puppy look. "I can tell."

Jason stared back with a blank face.

So Dick changed tactics. "What about all the other kids in that school who count on their teachers to protect them?"

"...." Something didn't add up. Why wouldn't Dick just tell Bruce and get the teacher fired and the kid punished? Bruce could use his influence to get a full-scale investigation on the man. But that would paint Damian as the victim. "You want to protect the brat's ego?"

"I don't want to protect his ego." Dick squirmed in his seat, finally sitting his ass back down on the chair. He seemed a lot more somber than before. "But I can't betray his trust."

"And you're still the helicopter parent."

Dick rolled his eyes. "Are you in or not?"

"Yeah, why not. Sounds like fun," Jason shrugged and sat down across from Dick. He pushed the plates aside. "Where do we start?"

Bruce stared blankly through the bars at his sons. His sons that had apparently thought it would be a good idea to infiltrate an elementary school and harass a teacher. They were in jail because they didn't want to hurt their little brother's feelings. That was kind of sweet, wasn't it? No. They should have still come to him with this kind of problem. He was Batman. He was dependable enough for
them to know he could keep this kind of thing quiet.

"So you got yourself arrested for breaking into the school."

"What? No." Jason shook his head. "Our break-in was flawless."

Dick gave a dry laugh from his cot. "I wouldn't call it flawless."

Jason shrugged. "The break-in was flawless. The break-out had some minor setbacks," he amended.

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Jason and Dick spend most of the day planning and preparing their mission for the next day. Infiltration wasn't really a problem for them. The vents were structurally sound and big enough for either of them to crawl through. What they needed to prepare were exit strategies from different parts of the building, as well as memorise the floor plans. They decided to go in their civilian identities. On the off-chance they were spotted it would be easier to come up with an excuse for them, than to find a reason why Nightwing and Red Hood would need to infiltrate an elementary school. Especially during daylight hours. Jason and Dick snuck into Tim's apartment to borrow all of his NERF ammo without tripping his alarm.

By the time they needed to get ready for patrol everything was prepared.

Luckily it had been a rather quiet night. There had been a lot of muggings, assaults and an attempted break in at the Gotham Modern Art Museum, but the thugs were amateurs so neither of the Bats had been injured. Going to the cave for treatment or support would have thrown a wrench in their plans. As it was Jason and Dick went home to change into civilian clothes and met up in front of Gotham Academy shortly before sunrise. Both of them carried a bag with two NERF guns and all the ammunition they had – plus the ammo they had stolen from Tim.

The brothers scaled the fence and picked the back door lock. They locked the door from the inside and climbed into vents where they settled down for a nap. They had decided it was easier to break in before the students arrived and the time after patrol wasn't enough to sleep at home.

Jason woke with a start when the bell for first period rang. He saw the low ceiling in front of him and his heart started racing. Jason shifted in his metal prison to see the tunnel above and below him. Dick was right there still asleep.

Jason rolled his eyes and kicked Dick. "Wakey, wakey, sleeping beauty."

"Le' m'sleep," came the mumbled reply.

"Fuck. You. We're only here in the first place because you didn't let me sleep last night so shut the fuck up and get moving," Jason hissed. Sound travelled in these metal tubes. If they didn't want to be found they needed to be quiet.

Dick slowly blinked his eyes open. "Jay?"

Jason rolled his eyes. "Yes, Dickface. Now be quiet."
He took water and a granola bar out of his bag. A shitty breakfast; but they would need sustenance if they wanted to complete their mission. A look at Dick showed the other had also taken out his breakfast. Was that... Yup. Dick had brought a bag of dry cereal.

"Where is Callahan supposed to be right now?" Jason asked between bites.

Dick popped some cereal in his mouth. "Should be in his classroom. Second floor, north-east corner. He'll probably be there until lunch."

"Kay. In that case. Let's go to the teacher's lounge and get coffee before we start stalking," Jason said with a yawn as he stretched as far as the vents allowed him to.

"First floor, north-west corner. Right across from the kitchen and the cafeteria," Dick shot back.

"Just get moving."

Jason and Dick started the short crawl towards the teacher's lounge. When they got to the right opening Jason peered into the room below. There were a few couches, a meeting table, bookshelves and – gloriously – a kitchenette. He couldn't see any straggling teachers, so he opened the vent plate and lowered himself into the room. Jason stretched and made his way to the coffee maker. He rummaged in the cabinets above it looking for a mug. "You want one?" he asked over his shoulder.

"Who are you?" asked a voice that was too high to be Dick's.

Jason spun around with his mug in hand and stood across from a heavy set middle aged woman dressed like a teacher stereotype. She was frowning at him. Assessing his jeans, t-shirt and canvas jacket look, probably disapproving.

"Oh, uhm." Jason glanced at the closed vent. That Dick had left him to fend for himself. He laughed nervously to by time. "I'm the substitute teacher."

The woman nodded. "Oh, yes, of course. For Mrs. Wagner's class."

Well, fuck him sideways. There really was an absent teacher. But who the fuck was Mrs. Wagner? "Exactly."

The lady was still nodding. "You should hurry, class has already begun."

Hurry? Where? To his classroom? She apparently thought so. That he actually had a classroom to be at.

"Yeah, I know," Jason said waving his hand vaguely. "But I only got the assignment an hour ago and I really needed some coffee." He looked at her through his eyelashes with the most charming smile he could muster under the circumstances.

The teacher looked Jason over from head to toe. "Well, you do seem awfully young to be a teacher. You probably stay out all night like my son does," she smiled a little. It wasn't like she was wrong. Jason was too young to be a teacher and he had been out all night. "Do you need help to find the classroom?"

Jason sipped his coffee. God, he had really needed the caffeine. "No, no. I wouldn't want to impose. I'm good with directions." Scary lady looked doubtful so Jason elaborated. "I used to travel a lot."

She waved him off. "I'll just show you the way real fast." She grabbed his arm and steered him out the door. "I'm going that way anyways. You can take the coffee."
What. The. Fuck. She was actually going to throw him in front of a freaking class. Jason was sure he heard Dick snicker in the vents. So he sent a scathing look at the ceiling while he was being dragged out of the room. Dick better bring his NERF bag and rescue him from this nightmare.

The lady dragged Jason up a flight of stairs and to the other side of the building. He stumbled into the classroom as the teacher closed the door behind him. Jason turned towards the student. Please don't be Baby Bats' class. Please don't be Baby Bat's class.

Second graders. He could work with that. Maybe. Probably. He was a trained assassin; he could get away from a class of second graders. Okay, so maybe he was freaking out. Whatever.

Meanwhile the kids stared at him. The weird guy that had been shoved into the room and stayed completely silent.

"Mr., are you our new teacher?" A little girl in the front seat asked.

Jason looked at her and considered. He saw movement in the vent on his side. Great. Dick was probably taking pictures or recording him. They should ban the whole family from taking photos and videos. Especially of each other. No retrospective punishment though, or Timmy would be grounded until retirement.

Focus. A class of second graders in front of him and Dick in the vent to the side. He had a knife, a grenade and some smoke pellets on him. Okay. He could do this. "I'm not your teacher. I'm Mr. Mysterio, the magician."

The children looked at him radiating copious amounts of suspicion. Ungrateful brats.

Jason rolled his eyes. "I'm practising a new act and I wanted to hear your opinions." He brandished his hands in a wide gesture trying to channel at least some kind of performer.

A boy spoke up. "My mommy said I'm not allowed to talk to strangers."

"And that's a good thing, usually. But I'm in your school, it's not like anyone can just walk in and tell a bunch of students he's someone he isn't. And I even introduced myself. So I'm not a stranger anymore." What. Jason wasn't even sure what the hell he was saying but the kid settled down so he took that as a win. "In your class I'm going to test out my disappearing act. When I'm gone, just say what you thought. With my magic I will be able to hear you."

Jason walked a few steps towards the wall opposite the vent and signalled Dick to let him know what was coming.

"Abracadabra."

Jason stealthily threw his smoke pellets on the ground. He ran towards the vent and scaled the wall. Dick had already opened it and helped him climb in before the smoke could dissipate.

The kids were coughing and opening the windows. Dick levelled a disapproving look at Jason, but Jason was just glad he didn't have to teach second graders math today.

"Let's go see Callahan," he said and crawled away from Dick to the right classroom. In the room they left behind the kids started evaluating the performance.

Dick and Jason finally made it to the right classroom just as second period began. They positioned themselves on opposite sides of the ceiling vent and peered into the room. The students (fourth graders?) were listening to Callahan drone on about some dead guy that did something important.
Dick rummaged through his bag and pulled out recording equipment. Jason got out his NERF gun.

"Not yet, Jay," Dick whispered. "We have to get the evidence first."

Jason rolled his eyes. It wasn't like they needed court admissible evidence or even anything that would hold up in front of the school board. They just needed enough that a leaked recording would mobilise all of the rich parents at this school. They would launch their own investigation anyways and as soon as Bruce got in on the action Callahan would never work in the education system ever again. Win-win.

Still, Jason refrained from shooting the man immediately. Waited for the recording equipment to be set up and Callahan to start his class. It didn't take long for the brothers to see something alarming. One of the girls didn't have her homework. Her hair was in disarray, her school uniform slightly rumpled, and even from the ceiling vent Jason could tell she had recently been crying or was trying very hard not to do so now.

Callahan was getting angrier and meaner by the second. The man did not raise his voice but his face, his whole head really, turned an ugly shade of red.

The girl tried to reason with Callahan, tears in her eyes. "I did do it! But they took my binder..."

Callahan scoffed. "Who? Who would take your homework?" He obviously saw the girl glance at a group of boys sitting by the window. One of the boys sneered at her and the others made gestures for her to stay quiet. The teacher ignored it and continued talking down to her. "The quality of your work doesn't even warrant copying, much less stealing. Don't blame others for your own laziness."

"But I did do it!" The tears started spilling over. The girl was getting desperate. "You can call my nanny, she helped me!"

With a smug look Callahan towered over the girl. "So you didn't do it after all. You were too lazy to do it yourself and stupid enough to forget it at home."

The girl's eyes widened. "But-"

"I don't want to hear it. One more word and you're in detention for the rest of the week." The man turned his back on the students.

The girl was crying silently, curling up in her seat and trying to hide face as best as she could.

Jason saw green.

His hand reached the edge of the vent just as Dick's hand closed around his wrist. Jason threw a scathing look at Dick.

"Wait," Dick whispered. "We can't drop down there as civilians."

Jason ripped his wrist out of Dick's hold. "So we let him get away with this?!!"

Dick shook his head. "This isn't Bat-Business. We just need the parents to demand an investigation. If that isn't enough we go after him again," he said, a vicious smile on his face.

"... Fine," Jason conceded. "But I'm shooting him now."

Dick rolled his eyes. "Just make sure you shoot him in different periods. Otherwise he might think it's a student."
"Yeah, yeah. I'm gonna shoot him aaaall day long," Jason grinned.

Callahan was writing something on the blackboard. Jason aimed his NERF gun at him and fired.

Callahan yelped and spun around clutching his head. "Who was that?"

The students glanced amongst themselves to identify the culprit. Nobody heard the snickering from the vents over the screeching of their teacher.

Callahan saw the NERF dart that had fallen to the floor and picked it up. "What is this? Did one of you litter in my classroom?!" He was talking himself into a rage.

Some of the students recognised the projectile and started looking around frantically for the badass that had dared to shoot a hated teacher with a NERF gun. Jason wanted to giggle.

"Fine. If no one decides to fess up you're all getting twice the homework and a quiz tomorrow," Callahan's face twisted into a cruel grimace.

Jason and Dick exchanged a look. That wasn't part of their plan. It probably should have been. Considering the man had practically screamed "volatile" at first glance.

"What are we gonna do now?" Jason asked.

Dick shrugged. "Accelerate the plan. Make him paranoid enough to be suspended as soon as O leaks the evidence."

"I meant right now."

"There's really nothing we can do. It's not like we can pull the fire alarm to get them out or anything," Dick grimaced.

Jason started crawling down the vent with determination.

Dick scrambled to follow him. He tried grabbing Jason and caught his ankle a few feet further down. "No! Jason! That's a crime."

Jason shot Dick an incredulous look. "You're a cop by day, a vigilante at night and you draw the line at a faked fire alarm?"

Dick shifted uncomfortably, chewed his lip. "Let's just... hack the PA system to get him out of the room, or call him or something."

Jason grumbled but changed course towards an empty classroom they had located during the planning phase. A place were they could talk freely and didn't need to worry about being heard. They dropped down into it and settled on the desks facing each other.

Dick pulled his burner phone out of his pocket and called the school's office.

It was a little tricky to get the secretary to get Callahan on the phone, but Dick kept insisting it was an emergency until she relented. She called Callahan to the office via the PA system and Jason let out a relieved breath when he heard the man walking through the hallway outside their classroom. Callahan answered the office phone shortly after. Dick had set the phone to speaker.

"Callahan," he greeted them.

Dick changed his voice a little and let his natural accent bleed through more than he usually did.
"Yeah, hey, I'm standing in front of your house and you're not here. Where do you want the chickens?"

The man was silent for a moment. "What chickens?"

"The chickens you ordered. Am I supposed to just leave them in your backyard? Why aren't you here?" Dick drawled.

Callahan was getting annoyed. "I didn't order any chickens! Who the hell are you?!" Dick rolled his eyes and grinned at Jason. He kept his voice bored. "Of course you ordered the chickens. Hey Joe, how many chickens for Callahan?"

Jason started playing chicken noises on his phone and called to Dick as if he was a few feet away. "Fifteen hens and one rooster."

Callahan raised his voice. "I didn't order any chickens! You made a mistake!" His face was probably red again.

"No, no. Sixteen chickens for Callahan at 5365 Jefferson. The delivery date is today. Do you want us to put the chickens in your backyard?" Dick said trying to keep a straight face.

Callahan ground his teeth loud enough to be heard over the phone. "No! I don't want you to put any chickens in my backyard! I want you to take them back to wherever they came from!"

"Can't do. The order says to deliver them so we gotta deliver them," Dick grinned at Jason.

Jason saw that as his cue. "Hey Bob, I found the spare key! Let's just put them inside."

"NO!" Callahan exploded. "Get those chickens away from my house or I'll call the police! You can't just break into my house and put chickens inside!"

"At the most it would be trespassing. We have the key," Dick said and somehow managed to sound like he put chickens in strangers houses all the time.

Callahan was seething. "THAT'S NOT THE POINT! Don't you dare enter my house!"

"Geez, Mister. Calm down. You wanna be here for the delivery? We can come back tomorrow. We might have to charge a little more. But then you have time to set up the coop before we come back," Dick drawled. Jason turned the volume on the chicken noises up.

"THERE WILL BE NO CHICKEN COOP!" Callahan screamed. The secretary could be heard scolding him in the background.

Dick ignored the man's outburst. "We'll be back tomorrow at ten. Be there so you can sign for your chickens or we have to fine you. Have a nice day!"

Dick hung up the phone and he and Jason broke down laughing. When they finally calmed down Dick spoke between wheezing breaths. "See? Now he has to stay home tomorrow and we can get him fired."

Jason rolled his eyes. So it had worked. That didn't mean he was about to admit it. "Come on." He shoved his big brother from the desks they were still sitting on. "Let's go shoot him again in the hallway and then find the little fucker that thinks he can bully our Demon."

Jason and Dick climbed back into the vents and waited for Callahan to return to the empty hallway in
front of his classroom. As soon as he was in range they shot at him. The man was furious again in an instant. He turned and turned around himself trying to find whoever had shot at him. When the only thing he saw were empty hallways a haunted look crossed his face.

"Ghosts aren't real," he muttered to himself and sprinted towards his classroom.

Jason and Dick burst out laughing. They kept giggling as they made their way through the vents to Damian's class.

Their little brother was currently in art class. Damian was explaining to his neighbor the faults in his picture. And after a few minutes of observation the only thing they could say for sure was....

"You know... Baby Bat is kind of a bully himself." Jason turned to make eye contact with Dick.

Dick's face scrunched up. "I'll talk to him when he gets home."

Jason reloaded his NERF gun with a vicious grin. "I came to shoot bullies. No exceptions."

"No!" Dick grabbed the plastic gun's barrel. "You can't shoot your brother."

Jason raised an unimpressed eyebrow. Not like it'd be the first time.

It was Dick's turn to roll his eyes. "I mean, you can't shoot Damian because he will see the NERF dart and know it's one of us. And he won't leave it be."

"He'd come looking." Jason deflated. "Fine. But I get to kick his ass during sparring later."

Dick probably thought he could fight about that later because for now he just nodded and turned back to the children in the room below them.

A blond boy walked towards Damian. He stopped next to him, looked at Damian's painting and sneered. "Seems like mudbloods really can't do anything," the boy said.

Jason had to muffle his laughter. "Is he using Harry Potter references as insults?"

"Uhm... I think so?" Dick didn't seem to be faring any better with this information.

Jason tilted his head in question. "Well... at least it's supposed to be a slur?"

Damian somehow managed to look down on the boy hovering over his desk. "You don't need to be petty, Roberts. We all know you paint like a three years old. No need to divert attention to someone else's work."

The boy, Roberts, sputtered his whole head turning red, either from embarrassment or anger. "I don't paint like a three years old! I do abstract painting!"

"Oh, really? I could have sworn the topic this week is still life," Damian drawled focusing back on his own painting.

Jason looked down on his brother proudly. "You go, Baby Bat."

Dick was silent for a moment before he looked up and waited for Jason to look up at him. "... I don't think he got the Harry Potter reference."

"What." Jason watched Dick with a blank expression and then glanced back down at their little brother. "You didn't read Harry Potter with him?"
"How was I supposed to know he hasn't read them?" Dick whined.

Jason watched his older brother. How could someone mostly intelligent sometimes be so stupid? "Who did you think would have read them with him? Talia? Bruce? Or even better: Ra's?"

Dick let his head fall down and barely stopped before his forehead hit the metal vent and gave their position away. "I will never get that picture out of my head. Do you think Ra's rooted for Voldemort?"

"Nah, he fancies himself to be some kinda Dumbledore." Jason shrugged.

The brothers focused their attention back on the students below them as soon as they heard the indignant shriek from that Roberts kid.

"Oh, please!" The kid tried to look intimidating. And it could have worked if he hadn't tried it on Robin. "The only reason anyone wants anything to do with you is because of your last name. But your daddy-dearest is known for taking in strays, so what makes you think you're anything special? You're probably not even really bloodrelated."

Damian narrowed his eyes at the boy. "Just because it surpasses your narrow range of understanding does not mean you are allowed to talk bad about my father or my siblings."

Jason recognised that particular look from Talia. "Oh, boy," he muttered.

And Damian did not disappoint. "Your obsession with me is flattering but I have to inform you that you do not meet my criteria for ally, partner or friend. So if you wouldn't mind, how about you go bother someone else?"

Roberts spluttered, turned around and stalked back to his own seat.

"Good to know Demon Brat can take care of himself," Jason said.

"We're still going to get revenge." Dick tapped his finger against his NERF gun. "For everyone that can't protect themselves."

"In true Robin fashion."

And they did. Dick and Jason waited until the Roberts kid had turned his back to them before they started shooting him in the back of his head with NERF darts. It was damn satisfying to see the little brat be frustrated and confused. He couldn't see who hit him because every time he turned around his classmates were nowhere near him. About twenty darts later the bell rang. Roberts packed his things and left the room with the rest of the kids.

Jason propped himself up on his elbows. "Back to Callahan?"

"Yeah, I think we gave him enough of a reprieve," Dick made to turn around in the vent and crawl back to the other classroom. "He can't blame the students anymore when he's with a different class either."

Jason followed Dick through the vent to the floor above where Callahan's classroom was. In every class until lunch Jason and Dick saw the so-called teacher single out one kid that he treated even worse than the rest of the students. Because of that the brothers took great delight in randomly shooting the man. Everytime he was distracted. Most of the children noticed that something was happening but none of them could locate the projectiles' origins.
When the lunch bell rang Jason and Dick made their way to the cafeteria vents. They almost tumbled down the chute that brought them down to the ground floor because they were racing each other. As well as you can race in a vent.

Targeting the cafeteria was a great, an unpleasant and a terrible idea at the same time.

Great, because there were a lot of bullies they could target in one place.

Unpleasant, because the scent of food reminded them that they hadn't eaten anything today except for a granola bar and dry cereal respectively.

Terrible, because hitting bullies in the back of the head in the cafeteria meant the kids thought someone had thrown their lunch at them. Jason and Dick had started an all out food war in Gotham Academy with only a few questionably well placed NERF darts.

Within a few minutes all teachers were in the cafeteria trying to stop their charges from killing each other with mashed potatoes. The gym teacher blew his whistle to get the kids attention. It didn't work. Finally he ran out of the room and a minute later a shrill deafening whistle was heard over the PA system. Jason and Dick blocked their ears on instinct and laughed when the kids below did to. Effectively smashing whatever food they had been holding onto themselves.

Damian still stood on a table in the corner where he had taken position during the fight. He was covered in food, glaring at his fellow students.

The principal stepped through the cafeteria doors observing the students and room covered top to bottom in a disgusting gunk that used to be edible. She sought out the teachers amidst the chaos and raised her voice even though no one dared make a sound anymore. "Congratulations. You wasted a frankly staggering amount of food in your petty fight. Get cleaned up and get to your next classes. Since you can not be trusted with your food lunch is over for today. If you haven't eaten yet I regret to inform you that there doesn't seem to be anything left to consume. Maybe this will make you think about the waste you caused."

The chastised kids kept their gazes on the ground and quietly filed out of the room. Only Damian held his head up high passing the principal.

The teachers followed the students to the classroom and the janitors and kitchen staff were asked to clean up the cafeteria.

While the staff was busy wrangling the kids and cleaning the food of walls, Jason and Dick snuck into the kitchen and stole their own lunch. Not like anyone would notice how much was missing today anyway. And if they ate most of the dessert that had never been distributed because of the fight they had inadvertently started themselves no one would know that either.

As they crawled back through the vents towards Callahan they made it a point to spy into different classrooms and look for bullies. Jason and Dick had to try very hard to keep their laughter to themselves when they saw the students. They had changed out of their prim uniforms and into their gym clothes, their hair still full of food.

Callahan behaved exactly the same as before lunch. At least the food fight hadn't worsened his treatment of the kids. Even if he grinned every time he saw the leftover food on the students. He was basking in their misery whenever the kids accidentally touched the food in their hair and grimaced.

Jason felt pretty vindicated while he kept shooting the man with his NERF guns. The school day ended to soon for his liking and shortly before the last bell rang Dick and Jason retreated back into
the depths of the school's ventilation system.

Jason packed his NERF back into his bag. "Let's get down to the sewers and get out of here."

"Or," Dick stopped his movement of packing his own gun away, "We take the front door."

Jason glared at his big brother. "The front door plan was supposed to be a last resort."

"Come on, it'll be fun." He didn't wait for Jason to argue and started crawling towards the front entrance.

"It'll be fun," Jason mumbled in a high voice. "As if."

Dick dropped down in a supply closet right next to the entrance and inched the door open just enough to spy through. When Jason joined him Dick grabbed him by the arm and tugged him into the empty entry hall. The school didn't have any cameras in the halls, only outside and in the office. A grave mistake considering how easy it had been for Dick and Jason to infiltrate the school and attack members of the staff and student body. Maybe they could tackle that issue after they were rid of Callahan.

Dick and Jason waited for the students to emerge from the classrooms. Damian was one of the first students to get to the exit. He was apparently not one to talk to friends after class, honestly, Jason doubted he had any. When he caught sight of his big brothers coming to pick him up he halted for a second. Then Damian came hurrying towards them. "What happened? Is father alright?"

Jason crossed his arms and glared at Dick. "Great idea, Dick. The kid thinks someone died."

Dick just rolled his eyes at Jason and turned to face Damian with a wide smile. "Everyone's good. We were just in the neighborhood and thought we'd pick you up."

Damian narrowed his eyes. "This is about that 'Mr. Mysterio' guy isn't it? The whole school is talking about him and how he attacked some students and a teacher. Did you apprehend him?"


Dick glanced at Jason reassuring himself that he was alright before whispering an answer to Damian. "Yup. We got him."

Damian nodded approvingly. "Then let's not keep Pennyworth waiting."

The brothers left the school grounds and Dick convinced Alfred to take them to get ice cream before going back to the Manor.

"Jason. You've already told me about two days worth of events – lots of which you should have been arrested for – and yet none of it is the reason we are here. So how about you finally get to the point?" Bruce was frustrated. He sat on his chair watching his sons through the bars of their cell. He had never thought he would ever be in this position. Well, that wasn't completely true either. He knew his sons too well for that. But he hadn't expected for Dick and Jason to be arrested together
and he had mostly thought it would happen in their teens, not their twenties.

Jason rolled his eyes at Bruce's tone. "Relax, Old Man, I'm getting to that."

-  

The next morning Oracle released the Callahan file. The man was absent from school that day since he had to wait at home to argue about his non-existent chicken delivery. It only fueled the rumor mill and gave the school board ample time to investigate and question students and coworkers. They fired Callahan even before the man realised that there would be no chicken delivery.

Red Hood and Nightwing celebrated by teaming up to take down a drug smuggler who was trying to establish himself in Gotham. Dick flipped through the henchmen as if the ground was a trampoline, kicking his legs out at opportune moments to knock guns out of hands and people out. Jason used rubber bullets today so he wouldn't need to keep his aim on kneecaps and shoulders. When the henchmen and their boss were down and secured Jason turned towards the crate of product with a longing look.

Dick nudged him in the side. "Go ahead. You earned it."

Jason grinned under his helmet and grabbed into his pouch for his grenade. He came up empty. Dread filled him as he frantically searched through every pocket on him. Nothing.

"Hood? What's wrong?" Nightwing watched Jason confused.

Jason cleared his throat. "I, uhm... I might have lost my grenade."

"In this warehouse?" Dick grimaced. He didn't seem to think he would be that lucky.

"... Yesterday, in the school?"

Dick groaned, looking to the heavens for guidance or some crap like that.

"It's fine. I just gotta go get it," Jason said, "and leave the drugs for the cops to get rid of."

Dick shook his head. "I'm coming. We ride together, we die together."

"Whatever you say, Dickiebird."

Jason and Dick changed back into civilian clothing so they could leave their trackers behind without raising suspicion for Batman and Oracle. They drove Jason's car to the school. No point in walking again if they were not going to stay and have to look for a way to hide the car.

Dick went to the office to steal back the NERF darts that had been turned in by various people in the last two days and had thrown the administration for a loop. Meanwhile Jason climbed back into the vents and searched for his grenade. They had almost fallen down the chute that led to the basement when they were goofing around and racing each other, so that's where he started. Within a few minutes Jason had found his grenade and Dick had gotten the NERF darts.

They left the school as quietly as they entered i-
"Stop." Bruce pinched the bridge of his nose and used one of the breathing techniques he had taught them all for meditation.

Dick glanced up at Bruce for a second before hiding away behind his hand again.

Jason drummed his fingers against the metal bars he held. "What?"

Bruce took one last deep breath and straightened in his seat. His face was as unmoving as ever. "You told me – in excruciating detail – about your first break in at the school, how you targeted teachers and students alike, started a food fight that made it on the agenda for the next PTA meeting and generally wrecked havoc." Bruce paused long enough for Jason to nod. "But when it gets to the explosives you shut up? Since when?"

Jason looked blankly at Bruce. "Since it's not important to why we're here."

"How are explosives you left in an elementary school not important?"

"It's not like they are still there! I noticed that I lost them, I got them back. End of story," Jason said.

Bruce crossed his arms and slowly shook his head. "Why did you bring a grenade to the school in the first place?"

Jason avoided Bruce gaze. "I'd forgotten it was still in my pocket, okay?! Can I get on with it now? I'm about to get to the good part."

Bruce stared him down for a moment and sighed. "Continue."

Jason rolled his eyes. "Thanks, Old Man."

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Jason and Dick left the school. They were in the car debating whether to go to BatBurger or RedRobin to get something to eat before turning in for the night when Dick looked out the window and saw it.

"Stop!"

Jason slammed on the breaks. He steered the skimming car to the edge of the road. Both of them were thrown into their seat belts. "What is it?" Jason asked reaching for the gun in the glove compartment.

Dick was opening his door. His gaze had not wavered from whatever he had seen in the construction site beside them. "There's a kitten."

Jason needed some time to process. By the time his fingers were massaging his temples Dick was already out of the car and over the fence. Jason let his head thump against the steering wheel. Why had he agreed to take Dick with him?
He got out of the car and saw his acrobat brother climb the metal structure that would grow up to be an office building like it was a jungle gym.

"Dick! Get down here!"

Dick didn't stop his ascent, instead he climbed faster. "Just a second! We can't leave a kitten up there."

Jason sometimes really wanted to shoot Dick. "I don't care about some cat! If it got up there it can get back down on its own!"

Dick halted just below the kitten and shook his head at Jason. Was that actually pity on his face?! "It's just a baby, Jay. It needs help."

Jason threw his hands in the air. "Fine! Get the fucking cat and get back down here!"

Dick cooed at the kitten and scooped it up. He snuggled it and put it in the pocket of his hoodie when he started to climb down again.

"Hurry it up!" Jason shouted from down below.

"I'm coming, I'm coming. Can't exactly move like normal with a cat in my pocket."

"You do it with Damian all the time," Jason muttered.

Dick was in the process of scaling the fence again. "That's entirely different. Dami is usually on my back, he can balance himself and he isn't trying to get away. At least not always."

Suddenly they were interrupted by a siren and flashing blue lights. The cops.

Dick sprinted back to the car holding the kitten in his pocket. "Let's go!"

Jason got into the car and revved the engine while Dick dove onto the passenger seat. "Hold on tight!" He stepped on the gas and swerved back down the road. He passed the cop car and gave them a two fingered salute through the window.

The cops turned their car around and started their pursuit. The sound of additional sirens started in the distance. Maybe antagonising the police should have been limited to their night job.

Jason sped down the road. He weaved through whatever sparse traffic was on Gotham streets at 4am. Jason disregarded the red light and barrelled across the intersection, barely avoiding a truck and two cars. The chasing squad cars kept multiplying even with the evasive maneuvers Jason pulled. Dick pointed him in some direction and Jason let him lead the way concentrating on driving and staying ahead of their pursuers.

"Take the next right!" Dick shouted over the noise of police sirens. He was still cradling that damn cat.

Jason evaded the two sportscars that were racing each other and took a sharp turn right. And slammed on the breaks.

A police barricade was waiting for them. Because Dick was awful and should never have been in charge of directions.

"Why the hell did you direct us towards the police station?!" Jason slammed his hands on the steering wheel and squeezed it hard. That way he wouldn't be tempted to squeeze his brother's neck.
Dick hid behind the cat. "I wanted to confuse them!"

"Great! They're confused and they caught us! Two for one special!" Jason spat and turned to Dick.

Their police pursuit blocked off the road behind them. The officers got out, training their weapons on Jason's car. "

"You are surrounded! Surrender yourself!"

Jason raised his arms, his palms on display through the windows. Dick held up the freaking cat. Jason really wanted to hit him but he also didn't want to be shot over a freaking cat so he restrained himself. Jason had a reputation to uphold. The cops inched closer to the car with their guns trained on Jason and Dick.

Jason glanced at Dick while trying to seem as non-threatening as possible to the police around the car. "Dick? This is all your fault."

"I really don't think that's fair," Dick said. The cat was thankfully calm and didn't struggle.

"You are a cop that was just on the wrong side of a car chase. Because you had to save a freaking cat," Jason pointed out. It was only then something occurred to him. "Are you getting fired for this?"

Dick turned his head to stare at Jason. He kept staring while the officers took the damn cat and got them out of the car. He kept staring while the cops cuffed them and led them down the street towards the precinct. They walked up the steps to the front door when Dick tilted his back and closed his eyes. "Shit."

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Dick kept his face buried in his hands but finally moved enough to lay down on his cot with a groan. "Don't remind me."

Bruce heaved a relieved sigh. He was glad that Dick finally said something.

Jason still had a few issues with that. "So you're finally done ignoring me?"

"I wasn't ignoring you!" Dick propped himself up on his elbows.

Finally Bruce could see his son's face again. Dick looked stressed but unharmed, not that Jason's story had indicated anything else.

"That was the first thing you said to me since they locked us in here! I'm still not convinced you actually told the cops anything." Jason turned around to face Dick.

Bruce wanted to roll his eyes again. "Boys."

Dick bristled and glared at his brother. "I was dealing with my imminent unemployment."

"You can just get another job," Jason snapped.

"Boys," Bruce tried again. He got up from his chair and took a few steps towards the cell.
Jason didn't hear him or didn't listen. "Do what every unemployed cop does, go into private security."

Dick jumped to his feet. He strode across the cell and came to a stop inches from Jason trying to seem intimidating. Dick glared at him. "The point in being a police officer is to reform the system from within! Being a glorified mall cop won't change anything!"

"BOYS!" Bruce shouted and finally, finally, got their attention. "You're not getting fired."

"I'm not?"

"He's not?"

Dick was obviously delighted and Jason obviously confused. Bruce suppressed a grin.

"No. Because they're not charging you with anything," Bruce explained.

Dick narrowed his eyes. "They're not?"

Bruce shook his head. "No. Are we done with the echoes now?"

"No. What the fuck," Jason exclaimed. He started pacing the cell pulling at his hair. "They chase us down – fucking block the road to catch us – and they're still not charging us." Jason stopped pacing and turned to Bruce.

"They never planned to arrest you for the trespassing at the construction site." Bruce smirked watching his sons' faces. "And they can't arrest you for evading arrest without charging you for that. You get a speeding ticket and most likely some other fines... But I left them my lawyer's card and he's going to handle it from here on out."

Dick came to the bars to stand directly in front of Bruce. "Then why are you here?"

Bruce shrugged. "The arresting officer said you should at least be picked up instead of getting off scot-free."

Jason joined Dick. He grabbed the bars and leaned heavily against them. "So why didn't he let us out when you got here?!"

Bruce looked Jason in the eyes and raised one eyebrow. "Because I told him I wanted to hear the whole story before you could get away from me."

Jason's grip on the iron bars tightened. "Get us out of here," he spat through gritted teeth.

Bruce held up one hand placatingly. "I have just one more question."

Dick motioned for him to get on with it before Jason bit through his own teeth.

"Where did you put the grenade?"

"Hidden compartment in my trunk. Now let us out!"

Bruce got out his phone and snapped a photo instead.

End Notes
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